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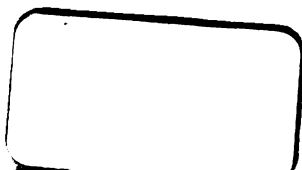
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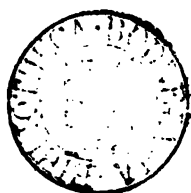
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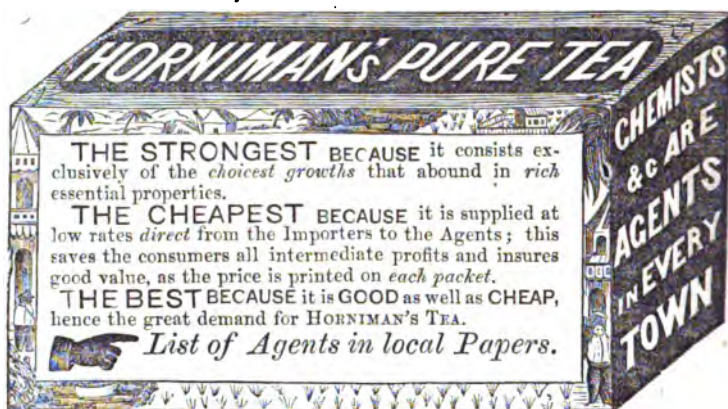
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THE KING AND THE MAIDS OF HONOUR.

THOUGH the youthful Louis the Just was swayed in turn by female as well as male favourites, male influence undoubtedly exerted the strongest power over his moody and sullen disposition. It was said of the constable De Luynes, that he was "master of his master, and king of his king," and that under his reign the title of favourite became—to use the expression of the President Henault—a regular charge upon the State. But rapacity or self-aggrandizement, and love of power or pelf, cannot be alleged of either of the two virtuous favourites, Marie d'Hautefort and Louise Angélique de la Fayette, firmly as they attracted for a while the affections of their saturnine monarch,—if, indeed, "affection" be not a sentiment too strongly emotional and warm-blooded to be attributed to Louis the Thirteenth at any time. All the writers of that period have pointedly dwelt upon the scrupulous chastity of Louis the Just. It appears certain, however, that—his wife always excepted—the sight of a lovely woman charmed him, and that he delighted to converse unrestrictedly with her, and would listen graciously and attentively to all she said, keeping his solemn gaze meanwhile riveted upon hers. At first it was greatly feared lest the princess whom, through State policy, they had chosen as his consort might sooner or later aspire to govern him, merely through gaining his confidence; and Richelieu, therefore, who perfectly agreed with the Queen-mother on that point, early strove to bring about an estrangement between the royal pair, so that the singular spectacle was shortly seen of a husband caring nothing at all about his young and attractive wife, without, at the same time, even dreaming of being unfaithful to her. Anne of Austria had come to France as a bride of thirteen, and for the space of some three years the royal husband seems to have forgotten that such a person as his consort existed. In 1619, indeed, it was very fussily announced in the *Mercure*, for the especial gratification of all loyal Frenchmen, that the King had at length actually begun to court the Queen. The Spanish ambassador wrote word to Madrid, in terms of the gravest im-

portance, touching the slightest token of familiarity that passed between them, and everybody else, whether Frenchman or Spaniard, became engrossed with the stirring matter. It was a strange thing to see the ministers of two powerful monarchies working themselves into a perspiration with urging a husband and wife to throw themselves into each other's arms;—alas! with but very little success. The young couple, without any particular disagreement, were yet habitually estranged from each other. Anne, surrounded by her Spanish attendants, spent her time in the enjoyment of the pleasures congenial to her age. According to her attached attendant, Madame de Motteville, she was strikingly handsome (which, judging from her portraits, we are inclined to doubt), but rather Austrian than Spanish in her style of beauty, with an abundance of light hair, which she wore in ringlets about her face. Although she had small features, with a little saucy, characterless nose, the fair skin of this dynastic blonde endued her with a complexion of uncommon brilliancy. Haughty and choleric, and heedless of aught save the first trifle that came into her head, the giddy girl-queen turned everything into laughter. And it was her laugh especially that scared away the taciturn and melancholy Louis. On her arrival in France she retained, we are told, the national costume; and, discarding the tapestried chests which then stiffly enthroned royalty, made use of a pile of cushions as her seat. The Marquise de Morny (quoted by Madame de Motteville) described her on the occasion of her own presentation as reclining upon this Moorish sofa in the midst of her attendants, habited in a dress of green satin embroidered with gold and silver, with large hanging sleeves looped together at intervals by diamond buttons; a close ruff; and a small cap of green velvet, with a black heron-feather.

At once regal and elegant as such a costume must have been, and which her lady-biographer delights to expatiate upon, it is amusing to contrast it with those which she adopted in after years, when the most monstrous caprices were permitted at her Court, and when it was by no means uncommon to see women of the highest rank, about to ride on horseback, present themselves in the royal circle in dresses reaching only to the knee, with their legs encased in tight pantaloons of velvet, or even in complete *haut-de-chausses*; while the habitual attire of the sex was equally *bizarre* and exaggerated. There were the *vasquines*, or rollers, which encircled the waist and extended the folds of the petticoats, thus giving additional smallness to the waist; the *brassards-à-chevrons*, or metallic braces, for expanding the sleeves; and the *offiquet* of pearls or diamonds coquettishly attached to the left breast, and entitled the *assassin*. Added to these absurdities there were, moreover, bows of ribbon, each of which had its appropriate name and position: the *galant* was placed on the summit of the head; the *mignon* on the heart; the *favori* under and near the *assassin*; and the *badin* on the handle of the fan. Short curls upon the temples were designated *cavaliers*; ringlets were *garçons*; while a hundred other inanities of the same description compelled the great

ladies of the period to adopt a slang which was perfectly unintelligible to all save the initiated: and when we add to these details the well-authenticated fact that the royal apartments were fumigated with powdered tobacco (then a recent and costly importation into France), in lieu of the perfumes which had previously been in use for the same purpose, it will scarcely be denied that caprice rather than taste dictated the habits of the Court under Louis XIII.

The young Princess had looked forward with eagerness to her first meeting with her intended bridegroom, whose grave but manly beauty so fully realized all her hopes, that, as she ingenuously confessed, she could have loved him tenderly had he possessed a heart to bestow upon her in return; but she soon discovered that such was not the case, and that Louis XIII. saw in her nothing more interesting than a princess who was worthy by her rank and quality to share with him the throne of France.

This was a sad discovery for a lovely girl of fifteen, who had anticipated nothing less than devotion on the part of a young husband by whom she had been so eagerly met on her arrival; nor did she fail to contrast his coldness with the ill-disguised admiration of many of his great nobles, and to weep over the wreck of her fondest and fairest visions. But, young and high-spirited, she struggled against the isolation of spirit to which she was condemned, and probably resented with more bitterness the coercion to which she was subjected by the iron rule of her royal mother-in-law than even the coldness of her husband, to whom she had been prepared to give up her whole heart. Sober and simple in his habits, hating pomp and pageantry, hunting and falconry were almost the sole amusements of Louis, and of which sports he was passionately fond,—without, however, allowing them to render him unmindful of his regal duties. He was so skilful at a flying shot, that a certain facetious person, once making allusion to his sobriquet of “the Just,” remarked with a sneer, “*Juste . . . à tirer de l’arquebuse.*” Too religious to have what is commonly called “a mistress,” he still coveted the possession of a woman’s friendship. The virtuous and high-minded Marie d’Hautefort was the first of her sex who held that pure relation towards him. Sprung from a good family in Guienne, Madame de la Flotte Hauterive, her aunt, happening to be called to Paris early in 1629 on some matter connected with the Court, where she held a post in the Queen-mother’s household, carried thither her youthful niece, whose budding graces appear to have created the happiest impression in the gay circles of the metropolis. The very day after her arrival, indeed, Marie won such especial notice from the Princess de Conti, Louise Marguerite de Guise—so celebrated for her beauty, wit, and gallantry, and as the brilliant idol of Bassompierre, the author of “*Les Amours du Grand Alcandre*,”*—that it was a new pleasure to

* Under this feigned title, the gay comrade in arms and minister of Henri Quatre narrated some of the more prominent love affairs of his gallant and good-natured King and master.

the somewhat jaded woman of fashion to make the fresh and charming provincial girl her companion on the promenade, and to watch everybody striving to learn the name of the lovely creature who so modestly peeped from between the curtains of her carriage window. In the Court coterie that evening the beauty and grace of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort formed the chief topic of conversation, and very little difficulty was found in persuading the Queen-mother to appoint her forthwith one of her maids of honour. Thus early, therefore, was Marie "brought out" upon the glittering scene of that Parisian great world, in which, while hidden in her native bowers, she had so ardently longed to figure, and where she exhibited qualities ere long that made her loved, admired, and celebrated. A never-failing amiability, combined with rare firmness of mind; a lively piety, guided by an unusual intelligence; a rather haughty demeanour, tempered fortunately by severe restraint, together served, in no slight degree, to enhance her precocious personal attractions. As classicism was then in vogue, she was called "Aurora," on account of her extreme youthfulness, innocence, and dazzlingly fair complexion.

In 1630 she followed in the train of the Queen-mother to Lyons, where the King had fallen dangerously ill, whilst Richelieu chanced to be at the head-quarters of the army of Italy, and there it was that Louis the Thirteenth saw for the first time his mother's young maid of honour, and began to show her marked attention. Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was then about fourteen years of age.

Of all men in the world, Louis the Thirteenth least resembled his father, the great Henry. Unlike that *grand gaillard*, as his loyal subjects delighted to term him, Louis the Just repelled the very idea of the slightest laxity in morals, and the facile beauties of the Courts both of his mother and his wife—strive as they might—failed to obtain even a passing smile or glance from him. Still that scrupulously chaste and morbidly melancholy man felt the need of a sympathizing affection,—or at least of some intimate friendship that should stand to him in the stead of all else, and console him for the never-ending weariness and vexation attendant upon royalty. The beauty, modesty, and intelligence of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort alike impressed him. Little by little he began to feel that he could not dispense with the pleasure of seeing and talking with her; and when, on his return from Lyons after the memorable *Day of Dupes*, State interests and his firm adhesion to Richelieu compelled him to banish his mother from Paris, he withdrew the youthful Marie from her suite, and appointed her to that of his consort, the neglected Anne of Austria, coolly begging her to love Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, and treat her well for love of him. At the same time he made Madame de la Flotte Hauterive lady of the bed-chamber to the Queen, in place of Madame du Fargis, who had recently also been exiled from Court. Anne of Austria received, at first, with a very bad grace the present thus made her. She clung to Madame du

Fargis, who, like herself, was of the party of the Queen-mother, of Spain, and of the *malcontents*; and Anne looked upon her new maid of honour not only as a rival in the King, her husband's, affections, but as a spy and an enemy. She soon discovered, however, to what an extent she had done injustice to Marie's character. The peculiar feature of it, conspicuous above all her other qualities, and the foundation, indeed, of her mind, was a generous pride, half chivalrous, half Christian, which urged her to espouse the cause of the weak and the oppressed. Regal power possessed no seduction for her, and the slightest appearance of servility was revolting to her. The exquisite form of the girlish maid of honour enshrined a heroine's heart, which speedily manifested itself when occasion offered. Seeing her royal mistress unhappy and persecuted, that alone sufficed to rivet her attachment; and through inclination, as well as honour, she resolved to serve her faithfully. By degrees her loyalty, her perfect candour, her good sense, and singular gracefulness of demeanour combined to charm the Queen almost as much as the King, and the favourite of Louis XIII. became likewise the favourite of Anne of Austria.

The first overt gallantry on the part of the King towards Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was shown at a sermon at which the Queen, with all the Court, was present. The maids of honour were, according to the custom of that period, seated on the floor. The King took up the velvet cushion upon which he knelt, and sent it to Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, in order that she might seat herself more comfortably thereon. The fair maid of honour, taken by surprise, blushed deeply, and her blushes enhanced her beauty. On raising her eyes, she saw those of the whole Court fixed upon her; but she received the cushion with such modest grace, and at the same time with an air at once so dignified and respectful, that the admiration of all present was plainly perceptible. The Queen having made her a sign to take it, she placed it close to her feet, still unwilling to make use of it. Nothing more was wanting to draw down upon her yet higher consideration from royalty than before. The Queen was the first to encourage her: seeing the evidences of so much esteem on the part of her husband, and so much virtue on that of her maid of honour—strange as such relations may appear,—she insensibly became their confidante. The memoirs of the period abound in piquant details upon this, the first Platonic love of Louis the Thirteenth. Let us read what Mademoiselle Montpensier says:—"The Court was very agreeable at this time. The attentions of the King to Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, whom he endeavoured constantly to amuse, greatly contributed to make it so. His Majesty delighted in the chase above all things, and we often shared that sport with him. Mesdemoiselles d'Hautefort, Chémereault, and Saint-Louis, the Queen's maids of honour, as well as Mesdemoiselles d'Escars (sister of Marie d'Hauteville) and Beaumont, went with me. We were all dressed in uniform, and mounted upon handsome palfreys

richly caparisoned; and as a protection from the sun, each wore a hat ornamented with a profusion of drooping feathers. The hunt was always arranged to take place in the neighbourhood of some pleasant country houses, in which great collations were found spread; and on returning, the King invariably got into the same carriage which conveyed me, with Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, home. When he was in a good humour, he chatted very agreeably with us about everything. Thrice a week regularly we had musical entertainments, and the greater part of the airs sung were of the King's composition. He even wrote the words of some of them, and Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was ever their subject."

These amorous strains of Louis the Thirteenth have not come down to us; but there is a verse of another song by an unknown author, and which depicts, we think, gracefully enough the fascination which Mademoiselle d'Hautefort exercised over the moody humour of her royal lover:—

"Hautefort la merveille
Reveille
Tous les sens de Louis
Quand sa bouche vermeille
Lui fait voir un souris."

Perhaps, had Marie d'Hautefort not been as discreet as she was beautiful, the monarch's love would not have been very dangerous to her. He chatted with her in the Queen's saloon of an evening, but his talk for the most part was about dogs, birds, and sporting; and timorous of her and timorous of himself, he scarcely dared approach her side for conversation. It is related that on one occasion, having entered the Queen's apartment unexpectedly, and finding Mademoiselle d'Hautefort with a letter in her hand, which had just been brought her, he begged to be allowed to see the missive. She did not care to comply with the royal request, because it contained some joke upon the novel favouritism of which she was the object, and to conceal it, thrust the billet into her bosom; whereupon the Queen jokingly seized her by both hands, and called to the King to take it from its hiding-place. As Louis did not venture to use his hand for the purpose, he took up a pair of silver tongs from the fire-grate with a view of endeavouring to seize the billet with them; but its fair owner had thrust it in too far, and he could not get at it. The Queen let go her hands with a hearty laugh at the mutual timidity of her grave husband and her prim maid of honour. But it was perhaps exactly because her prudence placed her beyond even a shadow of suspicion that the young *dame d'atours* of Anne of Austria could thus divert herself in the presence of her royal mistress by defying a prince so scrupulously chaste, and whose first impulse under such trying circumstances was, says Montglat, "to draw back his hands as it were from fire."

The distrust of the wary cardinal was not so easily lulled as that of the young Queen; far from it. The good understanding between the

favourite and the consort of the monarch, in whose name he solely governed the State, gave him to apprehend a pact, by means of which his despotism might be menaced.

In order, therefore, to detach Louis from his new confidante, he whispered in his ear the insinuation that Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, not satisfied with contradicting and rallying him to his face, joined the Queen in secretly ridiculing him,—an accusation that was not, indeed, altogether unfounded. At the same time he set his creatures to extol Mademoiselle de la Fayette, another of the Queen's maids of honour, to the King. This manœuvre succeeded. The King, to pique Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, paid marked attention to Mademoiselle de la Fayette, who was her inferior on the score of brilliancy, beauty, and intellect, but her superior, probably, in the endowments of heart and character.

Marie d'Hautefort was a dazzling blonde, precociously invested with charms the most formidable. Louise Angelique de la Fayette was a delicate brunette. If she could not boast of the lofty carriage of her companion maid of honour, if she did not command equal admiration, she ingratiated herself, slowly but surely, by a most winning gentleness and meekness. In the place of vivacity and gracefulness, she possessed judgment and firmness, with a heart inclined to tenderness, but defended by a sincere piety. Certain persons who enjoyed a portion of the King's confidence—easy-going courtiers, like Saint-Simon, for instance, who was a kind of favourite of the King to a certain extent, and who had made a sort of pact with the minister, and thought only of pleasing him, and several others also (among whom has been included, rightly or wrongly, the uncle even of Mademoiselle de la Fayette, the reverend Bishop of Limoges)—induced Louis XIII. to single out for his peculiar attention the youthful Louise Angelique, by their perpetual praise of her singular merits. At length Mademoiselle de la Fayette began also to be flattered by the Sovereign's condescension and homage; but when he opened his heart to her, and disclosed all its inmost sorrows, its profound weariness amid the grandeurs of royalty; when she beheld one of the most powerful monarchs of Europe more wretched than the lowest of his subjects, she could not refrain from a tender compassion, and, entering into his troubles, strove to mitigate them by her feminine sympathy. The King, finding himself at his ease for the first time in his life with a woman, revealed all the better qualities of his nature,—what there lurked in him of intellect, of sterling truthfulness, and good intention; and he tasted at last of that peace and serenity which flow so abundantly from a reciprocal affection. It is not very surprising, therefore, to find that this intimacy ended in Mademoiselle de la Fayette loving, with an almost sisterly love, Louis the Thirteenth. This intimacy lasted for two years, until 1637, undeviatingly noble, touching, and truly admirable throughout. Mademoiselle de la Fayette resembles Mademoiselle de la Vallière, but La Vallière before she had fallen. Louis the Just, it is true, was neither so dangerous nor so impetuous as Louis the Fourteenth.

On one occasion, however, overcome by her tenderness, and by the necessity he felt for seeing her at any time, he entreated her to allow him to instal her at Versailles, there to be wholly devoted to him. That entreaty alarmed the virtue of the young girl—a veritable maiden of honour,—and warned her of the danger she was incurring. Louis never renewed the proposal that had momentarily escaped him, but Mademoiselle de la Fayette did not forget it, and she resolved to put an end to a difficult position in a manner equally worthy of the monarch and of herself. Louise Angelique determined to take the veil. Nevertheless, she relaxed not in her endeavours to bring about a reconciliation between the King and Queen, and to loosen the yoke of Richelieu. Thus, while all without exception, from Mathieu Molé, the chancellor, up to Mons. the King's brother, bowed and trembled before the imperious cardinal, two young girls, without fortune, and placed almost within his grasp, resisted him. In vain he strove to gain over Mademoiselle de la Fayette; he succeeded no better with her than with Mademoiselle d'Hautefort. He then had recourse to his customary manoeuvres: he fomented the scruples of the two lovers; and after many struggles, which have been related at length by Madame de Motteville, Mademoiselle de la Fayette withdrew herself into the convent of the Filles de Sainte-Marie de la Visitation, Rue St. Antoine. The King visited her there during several months. The saintly nun spoke to him through the grated window of the cloister with still more force and authority than in their bygone interviews. She could not influence his policy, but she softened him somewhat in his bearing towards his wife; and it chanced one evening, in returning from the convent of the Rue St. Antoine, that, compelled by a storm to relinquish his intended return to St. Maur, and to pass the night at the Louvre, where the Queen was then sojourning, Louis XIII. gave Louis XIV. to France.*

But after the retirement of Mademoiselle de la Fayette, and until the day on which the coming maternity of Anne of Austria became apparent, and put an end to, or at least brought some mitigation of her woes, the strangest events had come to pass. The Queen had stood within the very verge of ruin, and she had been only saved by the intrepid devotedness of her young and faithful friend, Marie d'Hautefort.

We will now briefly recur to the position in which we left that "mal-content" maid of honour, beside her royal mistress, before narrating the act of devoted courage that has so deservedly ennobled her name.

Richelieu had, as we have said, at first witnessed with pleasure the King's predilection for a youthful beauty who belonged to no party, but whose character, with all his astuteness, he evidently did not divine. He hoped that an agreeable distraction would soften somewhat that sombre

* Louis le Grand, born in 1638, was called *Dieu-donné* in his infancy, because the French considered him the gift of Heaven,—the Queen, his mother, having been barren for twenty-three years previously.

and eccentric humour of his Sovereign, which was a perpetual source of uneasiness to him. He therefore lavished compliments and caresses upon the first young female favourite of Louis, and set himself even to appease the bickerings which often arose during their fluctuating intercourse, firmly believing that he should in return gain her over to his cause, and render her devoted to his interests. But she who had refused to consent to sacrifice her mistress to the King himself, felt her cheek glow with indignation whilst listening to her priestly persecutor, and, scornfully rejecting the cardinal's advances, disdained his friendship at a time when there was not another lady within the Court circle who would not have devoutly offered up her orisons to have been so distinguished.

Now that we are able to grasp the entire range of the seventeenth century, from the flood of light cast upon it by innumerable memoirs, as well as documentary annals, and trace almost step by step its regular march, from the glorious beginnings of Henry the Fourth down to the last sorrowful years of Louis the Fourteenth, it is easy for us both to comprehend and absolve Richelieu. We can conceive that to have done, at once and for ever, with the relics of feudal society; to place the royal power irrevocably above that of an aristocracy—numerically in excess, ill-regulated, and turbulent;—to hinder the Protestants from forming a State within a State, and make them obedient to the common law; to arrest the House of Hapsburg, already mistress of one-half of Europe; to aggrandise the territories of France, and introduce some degree of order and unity amongst the new phase of society springing up therein, so full of life and vigour, but in which the most discordant elements struggled, an extraordinary energy was needed, and perchance, for a season, an enlightened dictatorship, a despotism at once rational and intelligent. But which of us, amongst the firmest partisans of Richelieu, could have been sure of approving his policy, and of cherishing an unswerving admiration of it, being witnesses of so many blows remorselessly struck, so many cases of exile, such oft-occurring scaffolds? His contemporaries saw nothing less than all this. Let us imagine ourselves, therefore, placed in the position of a young and well-born girl, sprung from a feudal race, located at Court by the Queen-mother, and transferred, when only fifteen years old, to that of Anne of Austria. The greater her nobility of character, the less was she likely to see clearly to the bottom of passing events. Mademoiselle d'Hautefort understood neither the interests of France, the state of Europe, its history, nor its politics. With all her intellect, so much vaunted for its vivacity and delicacy, she was incapable of penetrating the veil either of the past or the future, and the present wounded her in all her instincts, whether of honour or benevolence. Graciously welcomed by Marie de' Medici, Marie had ere long beheld her exiled, and learned that her first protectress, the wife of Henry the Great, and the mother of Louis the Thirteenth, whose wrongs surpassed her comprehension, had been reduced to such dire poverty as to subsist in Belgium on the charity

of strangers. The observant maid of honour had not known Anne of Austria in her early and somewhat volatile youth, but since 1630 she had seen nothing that could shock the most prudish severity. She found it quite natural that, forsaken and ill-treated by her husband, the Queen should ask aid of her brother the King of Spain, and that, oppressed by Richelieu, she should defend herself with any weapon that came to her hand. She witnessed the woes of her royal mistress, and believed in her virtue. In 1633, Mademoiselle d'Hautefort saw the blow struck which dispersed the inner circle of the Queen, when Madame de Chevreuse, whose intrepidity, if nothing else, elicited her admiration, was driven from Court for the second time, and the Chevalier de Jars condemned to death, and only receiving pardon upon the scaffold. Whilst all these cruelties aroused indignation in Mademoiselle d'Hautefort's bosom, the courageous fidelity of the Queen's friends served to strengthen her own. She braved, therefore, the prophetic menaces of Louis the Thirteenth, repelled the offers of Richelieu, who was nothing more in her eyes than a talented tyrant, and gave herself up wholly and solely to Queen Anne, firmly resolved to share her destiny even to the end.

Richelieu, failing to gain her over, next sought to ruin her in the King's estimation. He mixed himself up more than ever in their frequent misunderstandings, no longer to compose, but to envenom them. From playing the part of a benevolent mediator, he now enacted the character of a severe judge; so that when Louis the Just, growing discontented with the young maid of honour, would threaten to complain to the cardinal, she mocked him with all the buoyancy of youth and lofty pride of her nature. Richelieu then brought into play two devices of most cunning invention to bear upon the King's heart. Louis the Thirteenth was at once mistrustful and devout. He had learned by gossiping report—full, as usual, of perfidious exaggeration—that within the Queen's inner circle, Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was in the habit of jesting with her Majesty upon his personal peculiarities, his moody temper, and his eccentric style of love-making. On the other hand, when, more and more smitten with the ever-increasing beauty of the charming damsel, whose graces grew with her years, he reproached himself for entertaining a sentiment too ardent to be always entirely pure, Richelieu, instead of appeasing, as before, his scruples of conscience, nourished them, and in the sequel ended by denouncing it as a sin to cherish in his royal bosom an immoderate attachment, condemned by religion. Louis for a long while resisted this subtle logic; and to carry his point, the cardinal was at length forced to give him the choice between his Eminence or Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, and to declare that he preferred rather retiring altogether than to continue to wear himself out in a struggle waged in the dark, throughout which the King's support had entirely failed him. This threat terrified Louis the Thirteenth, and Richelieu, perceiving that he was vacillating, to bring him at once to a decision, told him that it was not a question of banishing Mademoiselle

d'Hautefort from Court for ever, but only for a fortnight or so, in order that it might be seen that the favour she enjoyed was not so great as had been believed. The King yielded at last, but not without stipulating hard and fast upon the condition that the separation should only continue for a fortnight. The cardinal assured him that he required nothing beyond that; but dreading the accustomed ascendancy of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, he made the King promise not to see her again. Scarcely was the bargain struck, than Richelieu hastened to carry it out. He sent a mandate, in the King's name, to the formidable favourite, ordering her to withdraw from Court for a while; and a command to the guards on duty, that they should not admit her to the King's apartments. The fortnight's exile having ended, however, and the imperious cardinal's mandate not extending to the *Queen's* apartments, the King and the maid of honour met again therein; but at length, towards 1635, at the termination of one of their bickerings, which chanced to prove rather brisker than usual, the sorrowful-visaged King formed the resolution of breaking with a mistress so lovely, but so little complaisant, and for several days he no longer exchanged a word with her. Louis, however, loved her not the less; and of an evening, in the Queen's inner circle, his melancholy but impassioned gaze scarcely withdrew itself from the attractive beauty. He sat contemplating her in silence, and when he perceived that it was observed, he averted his eyes in another direction. But the rupture once begun, the watchful cardinal contrived to widen and prolong it for some two years.

The grief of Anne of Austria at the loss of such a friend may easily be imagined, of whose misfortune, too, she accused herself of being the cause. She wept, sobbed, and embraced her maid of honour many times; and not knowing sufficiently how to compassionate her trying position, or what to offer her, she took the diamond jewels from her ears, worth upwards of ten or twelve thousand crowns, and gave them to Marie, begging her to keep them as a token of their mutual affection.

The year 1637 proved the saddest and most trying period that it had yet been Anne's lot to pass through. Never before had Louis the Thirteenth forsaken her to such an extent, and the deserted Queen had only kept around her a very small number of friends and attendants, out of which she had formed for herself a slender yet familiar circle—scarcely to be called a Court, but still into which the vigilant glance of the ubiquitous cardinal frequently contrived to penetrate.

Wearied with her sufferings, Anne of Austria pondered upon some desperate enterprise which might set her free from her embarrassment; in which, at least, she intrigued with Madame de Chevreuse, then under banishment in Touraine, and carried on a more than equivocal correspondence with her two brothers, the Cardinal Infanta and King Philip IV., during the time that Spain was at war with France. One of her domestics, whom she employed in this correspondence, and who was in all her secrets,

La Porte, was arrested, thrown into one of the dungeons of the Bastile, and subjected to a most terrible ordeal. After beginning by denying everything with the most astonishing assurance, the Queen, pressed by Richelieu and by irrecusable indications, dreading the heaviest calamities, made certain grave avowals, which have come down to our times, and which, although of a character sufficiently weighty as they stand, could not have been complete; for if they had, the Queen need merely have caused La Porte to be instructed by the Chancellor Seguier, and by a letter in her own handwriting, to declare all that he knew; whilst she, in fact, adopted a very different line of conduct. She considered her fate as suspended by a hair, and that it was absolutely necessary, according to the turn which the affair might take, that Madame de Chevreuse should either take flight or remain where she was. It was especially important, likewise, that La Porte, in his replies to the interrogatories, should not go beyond the avowals of the Queen; and, also, that he should own all that she had confessed, in order to give to their common declarations a perfect semblance of truth. La Porte, intimidated, might reveal too much, or his persistence in denying everything might suggest a mystery; the Queen dreaded alike his strength and his weakness. A secret understanding was necessary, therefore, but the difficulty was how to obtain it; how to get at La Porte, buried in his cell in the depths of the Bastile; how forewarn even Madame de Chevreuse, ignorant of what was going on, and who might at any moment be arrested.

At this serious conjuncture, Marie d'Hautefort resolved to save her royal mistress, or be lost with her. For her sake she had already sacrificed the King's favour, that of Richelieu, and her chance of worldly prosperity,—she who had nothing beside her wit and beauty, and who naturally loved show and splendour. She did more on this occasion—she risked for her that which was a thousand times more precious than fortune or even life itself—she risked her reputation. She stifled that instinctive modesty and reserve which at once constituted her highest charm and glory; she who until then had turned a deaf ear to every flattering proposal, and who had not permitted herself to write, under any pretext whatever, one single line in the shape of a *billet-doux* to any man living,—this glorious girl condemned herself to play a part the most repugnant to all her tastes and all her habits. As a first step, she persuaded a gentleman, one of her kinsmen, M. de Montalais, to go to Tours and apprise Madame de Chevreuse of the state of affairs, to desire her to remain quietly there; at the same time to take every precaution, and tell her that she should be warned whether to flee or stay by the receipt of a prayer-book bound either in red or in green, according to the part it might be necessary to take. Next, on her own side, she proceeded to disguise herself as a grisette, daub with paint her lovely countenance, shroud her fair locks in a large, close-fitting head-dress, and at peep of day, ere any one was stirring within the walls of the Louvre, she quitted

it by stealth, took a hired vehicle, and was driven to the Bastile. She knew that its gloomy recesses held a prisoner who once already had risked his head in the Queen's behalf, displayed even in chains an unflinching firmness, and had only quite recently descended from the scaffold to which he had been condemned—François de Rochechouart, then called the *Chevalier*, afterwards the *Commandeur de Jars*. He had just begun to breathe again after undergoing that terrible ordeal, and was allowed to enjoy a certain degree of liberty within the fortress, and to receive visitors. The noble-minded maid of honour, judging of the chevalier by herself, believed that she might prevail upon him to risk his head a second time. To his gaolers she gave herself out to be the sister of his *valet de chambre*, who had just come to acquaint the chevalier that her brother was at the point of death, and to speak with him about certain pressing matters. De Jars, who knew his servant to be in good health, was not at all disposed to put himself to the inconvenience of receiving such a visit, and the lofty Marie d'Hautefort was obliged to wait some considerable time in the quarters of the *corps de garde*, which was at the entrance-gate of the Bastile, exposed to the rude gaze and jests of all the soldiers, and who, from the peculiarity of her costume, took her for an equivocal sort of damsel. She bore it all in silence, holding her head-gear so close with both hands that neither eyes nor features might be seen. At length the Chevalier de Jars decided upon granting the interview. Not recognizing her at first, he was on the point of treating her in a rather unceremonious manner; when, drawing him aside from the bystanders, and entering the courtyard with the gallant De Jars, the only reply she made to his overtures was to raise her hood and show him that adorable face which, once beheld, could never be forgotten. "Ah, Mademoiselle! is it you?" exclaimed the chevalier. She enjoined silence, and explained in a few brief sentences what the Queen required of him. Their import had relation to the practicability of getting a sealed letter conveyed to La Porte, in which directions were given him as to how far he might and ought to go in his declarations. That letter she placed in the chevalier's hands, saying, "This, sir, is what the Queen bade me give you; you must use all your address and credit in this very place to insure such letter reaching the prisoner in safety with whose name it is superscribed. I ask much of you, but I have counted on your not abandoning me in the project I have formed of extricating the Queen from the imminent peril in which she is involved." The chevalier, brave though he was, saw with some astonishment that it was a question of running another risk of his life. He weighed it and pondered over it for some length of time. Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, perceiving him hesitate, exclaimed, "What! do you deliberate, and you see what I hazard? for if I chance to be discovered, what will people say of me?" "Eh bien!" replied the chevalier; "what the Queen requests must be done—there is no help for it. I have only just managed to descend the

steps of the scaffold, and I must now, I suppose, dance up them again. That's all."

Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was equally fortunate in again escaping recognition on returning to the Louvre as on quitting it in the morning. She found also faithfully on the watch, in a dark corner near her own apartment, her maid, whom she had placed there as a sentinel before she started, lest the King passing near that way to mass, chancing to make some inquiries after her health, it should not fail being told him that, having found herself indisposed during the night, she was sleeping later than usual. But when she found herself once more safe within the four walls of her own chamber, and reflected on the adventure she had just achieved, she felt terrified at the bare remembrance. The young and modest maiden was no longer the heroine, and she sank on her knees to offer fervent thanks to Heaven for having guided and protected her.

The Chevalier de Jars did wonders. His chamber was four stories above the dungeon wherein La Porte was confined. Boring a hole through his flooring, he let down the Queen's letter by fastening it to a string, accompanying it with an entreaty to the prisoner occupying the second chamber to do the like with the important missive, and so on successively down to the lowest, in which lay La Porte, strongly enjoining the most profound secrecy. In such manner did the Queen's letter reach the hands of the faithful *valet de chambre* intact. An astonishing thing, that so difficult and complicated a manœuvre, and which was carried on for several nights, should have been accomplished without any of the gaolers perceiving it, or any of those who took part in it compromising the whole by the slightest indiscretion! In such wise, that this prisoner, so jealously guarded in a *cachot* barricaded with doors of iron, received detailed instructions that put him in a position to be able to justify thoroughly both himself and his royal mistress. The persistence exhibited by La Porte all along would have been turned against the Queen, if in the end it had not been enlightened and guided by the letter which luckily reached him, thanks to the bold energy of the Chevalier de Jars, whose devotion was due to the example of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort.

So soon as the lovely Marie could reasonably cherish a hope of success, she had hastened to despatch to Madame de Chevreuse, as had been agreed upon, the prayer-book, in the favourable-coloured cover, which was to impart confidence, and keep her where she was. But, unfortunately, either Madame de Chevreuse mistook the signal colour of the cover, or Mademoiselle d'Hautefort herself did. However that might be, Madame de Chevreuse understood that all was going wrong; and as that which she most dreaded was to be thrown into prison, she made a hasty flight, disguised in male attire, and sought refuge in Spain, where the brother of Anne of Austria welcomed her almost as warmly as the Duke of Lorraine had received her formerly, on the occasion of her first banishment. This untoward event, happening shortly before the last interrogation of La

Porte, revived and excited to the highest degree the irritation and suspicions of Richelieu. Redoubled severity was shown towards the Queen; La Rochefoucauld, whom Madame de Chevreuse had seen for a moment while passing through Vertueil for the purpose of changing horses, was flung into prison for a short time, and none knew what turn things might take if La Porte, assuming the appearance of yielding to the *official* order in which the Queen directed him to disclose everything, had not admirably confirmed the declaration of his mistress in the mode concerted, and by that means persuaded the King and the cardinal that the whole matter was of less importance than they had at first surmised.

It is needless to tell with what lively gratitude Anne of Austria was penetrated for De Jars, La Porte, and more than all, for her youthful and intrepid maid of honour, and what promises she made her should she ever again see better days. But Mademoiselle d'Hautefort had already received her reward. She had felt her heart beat with that energy which makes the hero; she had forgotten self for the welfare of another; she had placed herself with the oppressed against the oppressor; she had been sympathizing, charitable, generous,—in a word, Christian, according to the idea she had formed for herself of the religion of the Crucified.

As soon as the pregnancy of the Queen was announced, at the commencement of the year 1638, that thrice happy and important fact helped to obliterate the impression of the ill-omened scenes that had so recently occurred, and brought back something like concord and amenity to the Court of France. Mademoiselle d'Hautefort was then in her twenty-second summer. The last few years had wonderfully increased the lustre of her charms. Louis the Thirteenth, who had severed himself from their intimacy with so much reluctance, felt, on beholding her again, all his former affection revive; and Mademoiselle de la Fayette being no longer there to amuse him, he became more enamoured than ever of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort. This second amorous fit lasted some two years, and this, like the first, was troublous, though chaste.

We will not dwell upon, but merely confine ourselves to a bare mention of the fact that Mademoiselle d'Hautefort did take advantage to turn to profit, on the score of worldly interests, the return of a tender feeling on the King's part. The sole favour which she consented to receive, and that as much from the Queen's hand as the King's, was the reversion of the post of lady of the bedchamber, held by her aunt, Madame de la Flotte Hauteville. From the time of her being invested with that appointment, she had the right to be entitled *Madame*, and so we shall hereafter call her.

The renewal of favour which Madame d'Hautefort next enjoyed for two years must have contributed to render her final disgrace only the more grievous. As we have said, Richelieu covertly and insidiously discredited her in the monarch's opinion, whose self-love she wounded instead of flattering his foibles. When the cardinal judged the moment opportune, therefore, he accomplished the ruin of the fair and dangerous favourite by

superseding her by one of the other sex. For some time past the Grand Equerry Cinq Mars had gradually taken, thanks to Richelieu's protection, the place which De Luynes in the first instance, and later Saint-Simon, had occupied in the King's affections. In 1640 Louis made a journey to Mezières, unaccompanied by the Queen, and consequently without Madame d'Hautefort. The occasion was propitious for the Grand Equerry; he secured to himself the confidence of his royal master, and the latter assured him that henceforward his heart would be wholly his, without any share of it being given to another. He kept his word. As soon as he returned to Paris he manifested great coldness towards Madame d'Hautefort; and visiting the Château of St. Germain shortly afterwards, he thence despatched to his first love, without any explanation whatever, an order to quit the Court. Stupefied at its receipt, Madame d'Hautefort wrote to the King that she would not believe that such a command had issued from his hand until she had heard it from his lips. The only answer to this was a *lettre de cachet*, which at first she looked upon as a jest. However, finding that all her endeavours to obtain an audience of the King were fruitless, she resolved to operate upon Louis by a surprise. With hood drawn down so as completely to hide her features, she stationed herself in the guard-chamber, through which the King had to pass in going to chapel to hear mass, and there awaited his coming. On his appearance, she approached him, raised her hood, and told him that she had been unable to credit the order of exile, after all the protestations of tenderness he had made her. Louis, taken by surprise at such an apparition, and such an interpellation, remained for an instant dumbfounded; but, making an effort to overcome his embarrassment, he replied, "True, true," and passed on quickly. Such was the somewhat rude and very abrupt *dénouement* of that Platonic amour—of rarer occurrence in Court life than in any other sphere of society, and so little understood in the following reign, that the Dauphin, son of Louis the Fourteenth, seeing at Court, at the beginning of 1674, the Duchess de Schomberg, asked in a whisper of somebody who told him that his grandfather had been in love with her when she was known as Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, "How many children did he have by her?" Madame de Sevigné, who relates this little anecdote in one of those inimitable letters to her daughter, piquantly adds that "*l'on instruisit le Dauphin du modes de ce temps-là.*"

After this signal disgrace, Madame d'Hautefort retired to the seclusion of an estate she possessed near Mans, and there she remained until 1643. Louis the Thirteenth having expired on the 14th of May of that same year and been preceded to the tomb by Richelieu on the 2nd of the previous December, 1642, Anne of Austria, become Regent, recalled from exile her former lady of the bedchamber, and was even gracious enough to despatch her own royal litter and guard to conduct her to Paris. The Queen wrote also to her with her own hand in these affectionate terms:—"Venez, chère amie; je meurs d'envie de vous embrasser."

Madame d'Hautefort accordingly hastened to present herself to her dearly beloved mistress, the new Regent; and "letter in hand," says Madame de Motteville, "she ran quickly up to the Queen's apartments, and was received by her far more coldly than could have been expected after the warm eagerness shown in inviting her back to Court, and the caressing kind of note she had written her." The familiarity of former days, it was evident, had ceased for ever. Several trifling privileges—among others that of the *entrée* to the Queen's praying-closet, to which Madame d'Hautefort attached much value—were not restored to her. This diminution of favour—explicable, perhaps, by the long absence of Madame d'Hautefort, which had delivered up Anne to other confidants, several of whom were secretly hostile to the favourite, and also by her position as Regent, which gave to the Queen "a majesty more imposing than that of the discredited wife of a King with no authority,"—this diminution of favour, we repeat, prompted La Porte, one of the Queen's most zealous servants, to hazard the remark that Madame d'Hautefort had now realized the truth contained in the words of the Psalmist,—"*Put not your trust in princes.*"

Doubtless, on that occasion, Madame d'Hautefort remembered the prediction uttered by Louis, her lover, in one of those paroxysms of ill humour by which he punished his fair friend for her preference of Anne, his consort,—"*You love an ingrate, and you will see some day how she will repay your services.*" Of the most important among those services Louis the Thirteenth remained ignorant to his dying hour. Madame de Motteville, speaking of that great and perilous service rendered the Queen by Madame d'Hautefort, adds, "It prevailed over her, perhaps, in the sequel, and induced her to contradict and criticize the Queen in everything." Certainly the conduct of that princess afforded, on one head especially—that of her predilection for Mazarin,—a handle for satire, and public report, as well as some of her familiar friends, did not spare her in the matter. But Madame d'Hautefort should have (just because she knew that the Queen felt herself to lie under the weight of an obligation) placed more bounds to her blame. Her devotion, ever increasing, rendered her more and more severe; and though she was serviceable, humane, and disinterested, as she was stiff (according to Madame de Motteville), and even somewhat rude (according to Montglat), she ended by wearying the Regent. One summer's evening, the heat being excessive, the Queen having remained without lights in her great cabinet, with Beringhen and Mademoiselle Beaumont, complained to them of Madame d'Hautefort. The latter, having overheard her from the little cabinet adjoining, entered abruptly, began to weep, got into a great state of excitement, and assured the Queen that, in order to make things pleasant, she would no longer show herself hostile to Mazarin. This scene ended in a reconciliation; but Madame d'Hautefort in no wise modified her line of action. The misunderstanding between her and Anne of Austria reached such a height that the Regent

only waited for an occasion to detach herself entirely from her, and give her her *congé*. On another evening, in 1644, whilst the Queen was at her toilette before retiring for the night, one of her tirewomen recommending to her notice, without much success, an old gentleman belonging to her household, Madame d'Hautefort supported that recommendation, adding, with a scornful smile, that one ought not to forget one's old servants. Anne grew angry, declared loudly that she was tired of being reprimanded, and flinging herself on the bed, ordered her to close the curtains, and talk to her no more upon any subject. This explosion of wrath, which was perhaps premeditated, was a thunderclap to Madame d'Hautefort. She implored the Queen's pardon, protesting at the same time her good intentions. She obtained no answer, and she withdrew all desolate to the solitude of her own chamber.

The next morning, whilst she was still in bed, ill from the excitement that she had undergone, she received an order to leave the Palais Royal immediately, where the Regent then kept her Court. But her sufferings were too great at the moment to allow of her obeying the mandate; it was only on the morning of the following day that she had sufficient strength to rise and cause herself to be carried to the convent of the Filles Sainte-Marie. Some time after, she quitted that asylum to instal herself in a mansion she had taken, wherein she lived grandly and nobly, although forsaken by the majority of her Court acquaintances, who dared not even pay her a visit. However, as she was still very lovely, and possessed a great reputation for prudence, there were some men of rank of sufficiently independent character to desire to marry her notwithstanding her disgrace. M. de Gèvres, the Marshal de Gassion, and the Duke of Schomberg were among the number of suitors for her hand. She gave the preference to the Duke, who was of German origin, but of another family to that of the celebrated marshal who, in 1690, perished at the battle of the Boyne. Madame d'Hautefort was in her thirtieth year when she espoused, in 1646, the Duke de Schomberg-Halluin, a widower without children; nor did he have any either by his marriage with Madame d'Hautefort, and it is an error that the lady has been represented, in several biographical notices, as being the mother of another Duke de Schomberg.

On her husband's death, Madame de Schomberg retired first to the convent of La Madeleine, Rue de Charonne, afterwards to her country house at Nanteuil. Her mourning over, she went back to Paris, but showed herself very seldom at Court, considering that after her marriage she had once more stepped into the good graces of the Queen. Later, when the frightful malady under which Anne of Austria had suffered for several years past attained its last stage, Madame de Schomberg was remarkable in her assiduities beside the royal couch. And under such peculiar circumstances also those two features, apparently so contradictory, were markedly perceptible in Madame d'Hautefort's character—harshness and humanity. When, during the last days of the Queen's existence, her

female attendants, sinking under the exhaustion of long vigils and excessive fatigue, were nevertheless kept standing as usual in her Majesty's chamber, as the etiquette of that period exacted, the Duchess de Schomberg exclaimed,—

"*Mon Dieu, Madame!* if your Majesty would but order these women to seat themselves on the floor! they are so tired that they cannot last out longer."

That was humane.

"*Eh bien, Madame!*" replied the Queen, "bid them place themselves on the floor; I did not think about that, and you please me by reminding me of it."

At the same time, perhaps on the same day, the dying Princess, having observed that Madame de Schomberg kept her eyes fixed upon her with an indefinable expression, asked why she was thus contemplating her.

"I am reflecting, Madame," replied the Duchess, "upon the great change which I see in your Majesty's person, which once had the finest and most delicate skin possible, and behold it now in that state to which it has been the will of God to reduce it!"

This was certainly very harsh and abrupt, and the poor Queen must have found it so. The writer who records the words just quoted adds that Anne of Austria said nothing, but merely raised her eyes towards heaven.

We have all our several weaknesses and imperfections; none, perhaps, among us are angels in disguise. Let us add, therefore, to the above censure the more agreeable portraiture a contemporary has left us of the personal and mental attributes of the fair maid of honour and lady of the bedchamber of Anne of Austria:—"Madame d'Hautefort is tall and of a very fine shape; her brow broad in its contour, which advances very slightly beyond the line of the eyes, whose depths are blue, the corners well cut, their orbs of sparkling brightness, with modest but surprisingly vivacious expression; she has fair eyebrows, sufficiently well pencilled, arching from each other at the point of junction of the forehead; her nose is aquiline; her mouth neither too large nor too compressed, but well formed; the lips lovely, and of a fine and vivid carnation; the teeth white and regular. Two little dimples on either side of the mouth achieve its perfection and heighten the witchery of her smile. The chin does not descend so low as to rob the face of its oval outline, but separating itself into two parts, thereby discloses a small hollow, which again forms another matchless charm. In her well-rounded cheeks it would seem as though nature loved to mingle its tints of rose and lily so daintily, that the one appears contending perpetually with the other. She has the finest *blond cendré* coloured hair conceivable, in large masses and very long, the temples being well covered. Her bosom is well formed, sufficiently developed, and very white; the neck columnar and gracefully turned; her arms round and symmetrical, with a plump hand and slender fingers. Her demeanour is

free and unstudied; and though she does not give herself certain affected airs which the majority of fine ladies assume, to render, as they think, their beauty more attractive, she does not the less possess an indefinable something pervading her entire person, that at once impresses the gazer with mingled feelings of respect and friendship.

"Such is, as nearly as may be, a description of the personal appearance of Madame d'Hautefort. There remains something to be added on the score of her mental attributes. With these she is amply endowed. She expresses herself with simplicity and precision, manifesting more common sense than imagination, and gives an agreeable turn to anything she talks upon; exhibiting at the same time a playfulness allied with so much modesty, that those who hear her take pleasure in listening. She is naturally prone to raillery, and understands the keenest banter; but as she is very pious, she knows so well how to regulate her wit as never to offend any one.

"This very lovely woman possesses the heart of a queen and the courage of a heroine; and it is so full of goodness, that one may say with truth that no unfortunate person ever quitted her without being consoled both by her advice and bounty. She has, indeed, a large and generous soul, is free-handed and full of charity, having ever been of opinion that her wealth and influence were given only for the alleviation of the miseries of her neighbour, of whatsoever rank in life. On first hearing of a tale of woe or need, she thought only about the means of bestowing her gifts in a manner that should not take the form of an alms, to avoid wounding the feelings of the recipient. How many liberal pensions has she not granted to girls and women of quality, to prevent their necessities from compelling them to accept succour from others, through following evil courses! In every state and position in which she has been placed throughout life—whether at Court, as the favourite both of the Monarch and of the Queen, her mistress, or married and a duchess—her abode has ever been open to those who derived their subsistence from her hands, or needed in some other way her succour.

"She was, notwithstanding, born with an extraordinary degree of pride and ambition; but happily a sense and love of what constitutes true glory and virtue led her to sacrifice everything to her reputation. Therefore did she enjoy a happiness but rarely experienced by persons who have, like herself, passed their lives in Courts; so that no one has ever said or written a word in disparagement of her; but, on the contrary, everybody has always been loud in her praise."

This virtuous favourite of royalty passed the latter years of her life in a mansion she caused to be erected for her near the convent of the Madeleine, and there she expired at the age of seventy-five, after bearing with exemplary patience to its termination a long and painful malady.

PICTURE-BOOKS AND THEIR MAKERS.

CHRISTMAS is the chosen period for the reign of picture-books. No sooner do—

“Wind and rain beat dark December,”

than our tables are laden with exquisite volumes, the glowing beauty of which is capable of banishing any amount of *ennui* or winter gloom. The publishers vie with each other in producing costly and radiant books, or cheaper, and perhaps cleverer, wood illustrations from the designs of really first-rate artists. Leech moves our laughter and our admiration by his wonderful delineations of the “humours,” as Shakspeare would have called them, of merry England. The illustrated newspaper is a-blaze with rich colour; and snow scenes of picturesque beauty, and painted feasts of purple grapes, and ruddy peaches, golden-breasted pheasants, and all those delightful comestibles which painters call “still life,” dispute our interest with more substantial banquets of turkey and plum pudding.

Do we ever think, as we gaze on our pictorial Christmas cheer, of the beginning of the art?—of the fate of those from whom our pleasure originates?

If not, let us now; it may serve to beguile a December day, perhaps, to read something relating to the infancy of the art which delighted our childhood, and still pleases our more mature years.

We must look far back into the annals of the past for the origin of picture-books.

Addison assures us that the pictorial art long preceded that of writing itself; and Assyrian history carved in stone, and Egyptian hieroglyphics, go far to prove the truth of his supposition. He tells us that when the Spaniards invaded Mexico, the natives “sent expresses to their Emperor *in paint*” (pictures), “and he received the news of his country *delineated by the strokes of a pencil*.” We may fairly decide that this was the first illustrated newspaper.

The books of ancient Egypt and of Persia were illustrated. The Egyptian papyri, the Persian silk-paper MSS., still remaining, are illuminated. The ground of the page is generally of a delicate or glowing tint, frequently powdered with gold; the borders are adorned with drawings of animals.

These *very* early picture-books are still to be seen in the British Museum.

Ancient Rome had also her illustrated books; but, with the usual conceit of that “self-endearing” nation, the said illustrations were portraits, the authors of the Iron Empire having been, we believe, the first to “leave the world a copy” of their features as well as their mind.

Varro tells us of a work on biography (dated 70 B.C.), which contained no less than 700 “effigies,” *i. e.*, likenesses—a perfect portrait gallery of old Rome!

The hard, prosaic portrait illustrations of the Romans were succeeded by the splendid colouring and delicate fancy of Byzantine art; and, assuredly, more beautiful picture-books than those glorious illuminated volumes have never been produced. The art spread; but we need not linger over this branch of our subject, since the modern fashion of illumination, and the works written on the subject, have rendered it familiar to modern readers. But we cannot resist reminding them, *en passant*, that one of the greatest illuminators or book artists of the Dark Ages was an Englishman, S. Dunstan; and that Ireland was famous for the art of illumination.

The binding of the old Roman books (judging from the consular tablets, or Diptycha) was frequently very costly, being of delicate carved ivory. The missal bindings emulated this splendour; panels of book-covers of exquisite carving still remain, dating from the eighth to the fifteenth century of the Christian era. By-and-bye goldsmiths' work was added, and jewels and gold chasings enclosed the dazzling pages of the mediæval artist—which accounts, we think, for the singular fact that to goldsmiths we owe, in great part, the invention of printing (Faustus was a goldsmith) and of copper engraving, Finiguerra being of the same craft.

But these picture-books—the glory of monasteries and princes—were too costly and rare for the people. The poor man's picture-book did not exist till the "Brethren of the Common Lot"—a religious order of the Netherlands—gave block-books to the poor to teach them Bible truths through the eye. But before we speak of these literary curiosities we must look back exactly a hundred years, and see what tradition asserts about the origin of woodcuts.

The story of the first picture-book *with engravings* is related by Jean Baptist Papillion, in his "*Traité Historique et Pratique de la Gravure en Bois*," 1698. Unhappily, its existence is not sufficiently authenticated to make the tale more than apocryphal; and yet it is so pretty and so *possible*—when we remember how seldom the real inventor or discoverer of an art gains his just glory from it,—that we cannot help giving it. It will at least amuse our readers.

In the ancient city of Ravenna, in the year of grace 1280, there dwelt a twin brother and sister, named Alessandro and Isabella Cunio, a boy and girl of sixteen years of age. Of noble family, and imbued with a strong love of art and great original genius (if their tale be true), they had painted eight pictures on subjects from the life and adventures of Alexander the Great—a "worthy" of that age, which converted him into a *preux chevalier* of chivalry. Being desirous of giving copies of these performances to their friends, they devised a plan of reducing them, cutting them in relief on wood, and stamping them on paper; thus achieving the first woodcuts. They formed the eight engravings into a book, probably bound with all the ordinary splendour, and explained their subject by verses. The finished book was thus entitled and dedicated:—

"The chivalrous feats, *in figures*, of the great and magnanimous Macedonian king, Alexander the Great, dedicated, presented, and humbly offered to the Most Holy Father, Pope Honorius the Fourth, the glory and support of the Church; and to our illustrious and generous father and mother, by us, Alessandro Alberic Cunio (cavalier), and Isabella Cunio, twin brother and sister. They were reduced, imagined, and attempted to be executed in relief *with a small knife on blocks of wood, made even and polished by this learned and dear sister*; continued and finished at Ravenna from eight pictures of our invention (painted six times larger than here represented), engraved, explained by verses, and marked on paper to perpetuate the number, and enable us to give them to our relations and friends in remembrance of friendship and affection.

"These were completed and finished by us both, at the age of sixteen only."

There is, in this dedication, just the self-glorification and tediousness of detail as to their performance (for which they had no name!) that we might naturally expect from the idolized and gifted children of the old Ravenna house;—an internal evidence of its truth, perhaps; and certainly (allowing it to be true) an almost prophetic provision for gaining due honour from posterity.

So charming is this glimpse into the higher and more cultivated life of that age, that we wish some artist of the present would picture Isabella at her ingenious task of block-making in that old Castle of Ravenna, aided by the young brother who so lovingly records her skill.

Unfortunately, Papillion will not vouch for the authenticity of the work, a copy of which had been preserved in the family of a Swiss officer, who told him of it, but at that time it no longer existed; and sterner historians of picture-books pass by Alessandro and Isabella as myths.

The first wood engravings were, without any doubt, the playing cards used in Germany before 1376. These cards suggested to devout or speculative "brief-makers" (as their manufacturers were called) similar pictures on religious or Bible subjects. They were appreciated, and became popular, people pasting them inside the covers of their books or on blank leaves. One of these engravings—the subject, St. Christopher bearing the Infant Jesus—is now in Lord Spencer's possession. It is the earliest known, and is dated 1423, a hundred and forty-three years after the apocryphal twins' cut-blocks at Ravenna. This engraving was found pasted within the binding of an old book of the 15th century, in the library of a convent at Rudheim, near Memmingen, in Suabia.

The block-books were doubtless even of earlier date. As we have said, they were given (or, at least, two of the best known were given) to the people by the good "Brothers of the Common Lot." They are very curious. "The Poor Man's Bible" is one of the best known. It is a small folio; the woodcuts are done on one side of the leaf only, then two leaves are pasted together, and thus form one. The pictures are, of course, from scriptural subjects, and rhymes attached explain and help their teaching. Very quaint and singular are these block-books, in which the costume of the Middle Ages does duty for all times and countries; and allegory blends

strange objects with pictorial representations of real events. But card engravings and block-books were soon to pass away before a better order of things.

"After the invention of moveable types," says Strutt, "the brief-makers continued to sell their publications for a considerable time; but when the engravings on wood were annexed to the books printed with the moveable types, they were gradually discontinued."

Of course, moveable types at once put an end to the uncouth printing a page at a time from a block; and people would not paste in illustrations when their pages were already rich with them; albeit we know book-collectors who still love that old fashion, and spend large sums in illustrating Chaucer, or other favourites, almost word for word, by having blank leaves bound in between the pages, and buying every print which can be devoted to the purpose. We have seen one glorious Chaucer thus enriched by modern art, resplendent in contributions from the pencils of all ages, which have by chance or on purpose illustrated his meaning or his words. Allow us to assure our young lady readers that such an amusement far excels in interest and common sense the present fashion of collecting monograms (so called).

Caxton's publications contain the first wood engravings published in England. It is a disputed point whether the second edition of the "Game of Chess," or the "Mirror of the World," date 1407, can claim precedence as the first English picture-book not illuminated. His "Royal Book" has a few cuts; "Divers Ghostly Matters" has one curious cut at the end of the volume; "Directorium Sacerdotum" has a very curious frontispiece. There are probably few of our readers who have not seen a "Caxton;" those who have not should endeavour to do so, and we think—with all gratitude to, and reverence for, the good old printer—that they will afterwards doubly estimate their Christmas picture-books. Still, in their day, those engravings were a boon and a delight.

But the quaint woodcuts were shortly to be rivalled.

There dwelt in Florence, about the middle of the fifteenth century, a goldsmith named Tomaso Finiguerra, who had probably bound many a costly volume, for part of his craft was the embellishment of books.

One day he let, by accident, a piece of copper, on which he had been engraving, fall into some melted sulphur. The impression was of course retained. The ingenious goldsmith caught at the idea thus suggested, and determined to try an experiment.

He filled the plate or piece of copper with ink, covered it with moistened paper, rolled it gently with a roller, and, behold! he had a perfect picture on paper, of his work. He had discovered copper-plate engraving.

This is the account of the discovery accepted by Walpole and Landseer. Huber gives another tradition of it.

"It is reported," he says, "that a washerwoman left some linen upon a plate or dish on which Finiguerra had just been engraving, and that an

impression of the subject engraved (however imperfect) came off on the linen, occasioned by its weight and moistness."

However this may be, the first copper-plate is by Finiguerra, the date 1460.

It appears he communicated his discovery to a fellow-goldsmith, named Baccio Blandini, who, not having skill enough to design his engravings, called in the aid of Boticelli, a man of a rare genius. The two united to illustrate, for the first time, that fruitful suggester of pictures—the "*Divina Commedia*" of their illustrious countryman,—Dante.

Meantime, however, Germany appears in the field to dispute the honour of the invention with Italy. In the year 1478 an edition of Ptolemy was published at Rome, with maps and engravings, by Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Buckinck, two Germans, the former of whom, in the dedication, claims to have brought both the art of printing and engraving to Rome.

It is quite possible that the discovery may have been contemporaneous in both countries; for we can scarcely fail to observe how often the same idea suggests itself about the same period of time to different and widely severed individuals, as if borne by the whisper of the wind, or as a germ of thought ripening in many places at the appointed and due season.

But to return to Boticelli's "*Dante*," for so famous a picture-book requires a little notice. Some of the engravings are stuck on the page, after the manner of the old card pictures; but generally they are on the leaf itself, heading the several cantos.

An admirable illustration, heading Canto II., is at this moment before us. It is one of the best. On the left-hand side Dante is meeting Virgil in the wood (which has a representative tree): the profile of the great Italian is towards us; it is a finely-cut face, full of expression. Virgil, in a fur-bordered robe and cap, has rather the air of a jolly abbot than of an ancient Roman. In the centre of the plate, Beatrice appears in the clouds addressing the poet and his guide, who are looking up at her; on the right is the entrance to the "*Inferno*," a not very formidable-looking black hole in a hill. Two words of the terrible inscription are visible over it, "*PER ME . . .*"

This edition is very rare and precious now, and the engravings are wonderful for the period to which they belong.

The engraver's art speedily developed itself in Germany. Albert Durer, Lucas of Leyden, and numerous other artists, have left us wonderful prints in evidence of their skill. Marc Antonio introduced a new and softer style into Italy.

But our task directs us homewards. England, in the mean time, possessed in a very wonderful degree the skill needed for the art, although ignorant of its application.

Whenever a mediævally given young lady rubs off an old brass in some ancient church, let her remember that she has before her a fine plate for engraving, if the artist had but known its other use. But he did not, and

his work (surpassingly excellent as it was) was worn and trodden by village feet, while his brethren of the Continent were taking impressions of grand pictures and noble designs which have survived the centuries.

And thus, though we had fine "brasses," we had no book with copper-plate engravings published in England till the days of Queen Katherine Parr, when an enterprising publisher, called J. Raynalde, printed a book called "The Birth of Mankind, or the Woman's Book," which he dedicated to Henry the Eighth's learned consort. Probably we owe this enterprising publication of Master Raynalde's to the taste for engraving which the celebrated Holbein introduced into England in this reign.

Hans Holbein was a native of Basle, the market-place of which city he had adorned with a peasant's dance, and the original of his "Dance of Death." An English nobleman, passing through Switzerland, invited the artist to England; but the invitation was not at the time accepted. Holbein remained at home, and, albeit a rough-mannered man, given to drink and low company, won the friendship of the great Erasmus. Urged by the advice of this patron, and wearied of home (where a shrewish wife rendered his life a counterpart of poor Albert Durer's), Holbein at length set out for England. It was a long and bitter journey. The poor artist was often almost compelled to beg his bread; but the end came at last, "and crowned the act." A letter from Erasmus introduced him to the family of Sir Thomas More, and there all his troubles ended. The great Chancellor gave him a home for three years, and employed his pencil in taking portraits of himself and his household. Holbein had forgotten the harsh, strange name of his first inviter to England, but on being questioned by Sir Thomas More about him, sketched his face from memory, and the family knew instantly who it was.

While he was residing at Sir Thomas's the King paid the Chancellor a visit, and was accidentally shown Holbein's portraits. Henry was a lover and a liberal patron of art. He at once received Holbein into his service, and gave him a good income and apartments at Whitehall, which he retained till his death, in 1554. Our readers probably remember the royal speech when Henry was defending his favourite from the vengeance of an offended noble,—

"I can at my will make seven nobles of seven ploughmen, but I cannot of seven nobles make a Holbein."

Henry employed his favourite to take likenesses of the Duchess of Milan (one of the ladies wooed for his wife), and of Anne of Cleves. But it is not of his portraits we would speak now, but of his great picture-book, the "Dance of Death." Who is not familiar with that grotesque, terrible, strangely fascinating volume? It is like an awful transcript of the age in which it was conceived and executed. Holbein must, we think, have felt, as he engraved it, that his early painting and present work were almost prophetic. Where, indeed, did death hold such fearful revels as at the English Court? His idea—profound, mournful, prophetic as it was—took there

a fearful and stern reality. He saw his early patron pass from royal favour to a bloody death. He beheld the golden-haired woman in her young beauty, and the noble in his glorious manhood, alike bow their heads to the axe of the executioner. Perhaps at times a mournful foreboding of the like fate gave force and expression to his graver, and realized to his mind the terrible spectre he drew. But to him Henry was ever a good master, and Death, when he approached the artist, came in the awful shadow of the plague.

The "Dance of Death," however, was not Holbein's only work as an engraver. A more graceful fancy is shown in his vignettes and ornamental frontispieces, which are very charming. He also illustrated the Old and New Testaments. Our readers may recognize his engravings by his initials, H. H., or HH united; though sometimes he signed them more plainly, Hans Hol.

Some years after the death of Holbein, John Blagrave, a man of fortune and good family at Reading, published an illustrated work called, "The Mathematical Jewel." To the frontispiece are appended these words:—

"By J. Blagrave, of Reading, gentleman, and well-wisher to the mathematics, who hath cut all the plates and pictures of the whole with his own hands."

These said plates and pictures are woodcuts neatly executed. But the amateur engraver's memory has been preserved by something more lasting than his skill in engraving.

He founded a singular charity in the town of Reading, which probably still exists. By his will he devised that every Good Friday three dowerless maidens of good character should throw dice for the sum of £10. The highest throw to gain the prize. The losers to be allowed to try again on two following years, with an additional maiden to make up the number. If all three years they were unsuccessful, they were excluded from future trials. This dowry seldom failed (we read) of winning the fortunate candidate a husband.

Archbishop Parker employed another English artist, Humphrey Cole, to assist in illustrating the folio Bible which bears his (Parker's) name. Cole engraved for it a map and frontispiece, in which he portrayed *Queen Elizabeth*, supported by Leicester in the character of Joshua, and Lord Burleigh as David!

A romantic story belongs to one of the greatest engravers of this period, which, although he was neither English nor patronized by England, we cannot refrain from relating.

Jacques Callot, the son of noble parents, was born at Nancy, in Lorraine, about 1593. He was an artist from his infancy, but the taste was discouraged by his parents; and eager to pursue his prohibited studies, which he preferred to the knightly exercises of the *manège*, he fled from home when but twelve years of age, with a band of wandering gipsies, or Bohemians, as they were then called. We have no detailed record of the

adventures of the little fugitive whilst in the company of his wild associates ; but at Florence some evidence of his skill in art must have been manifested, for he won the notice of a friend of the Grand Duke, who placed him in the studio of Carlo Galma. From thence the young wanderer went to Rome. We can imagine him gazing with delighted eyes on the mirth and picturesque gaiety of the Carnival, when a hand is laid on his shoulder, and a grave voice addresses him by name. The portly merchant whom he starts to recognize, and who has thus claimed, as it were, the poorly clad wanderer, is from Nancy. He tells the lad of his mother's grief—of his father's anxiety; and the child, touched and regretful, suffers himself to be taken home again.

He may have been received—probably he was—with the rejoicings over the returning prodigal, but permission to pursue his beloved art was still refused him. Again his longing for the pencil and the graver returned. He fled once more from home. His elder brother pursued him, and, rightly guessing which land would be his loadstone, found him at Turin, on his way to Italy. The *Sieur Callot*, now finding it vain to struggle against so marked a vocation, reluctantly consented to his son's wishes ; but, as more befitting his rank, sent him to Italy in the train of an envoy from the Duke of Lorraine to the Pope.

Here he studied engraving under Philip Tomassin ; but the *maestro* had a beautiful young wife, and was jealous of his noble pupil, who at once wisely withdrew to Florence, where the Grand Duke patronized him, and encouraged him in his studies. He returned to Nancy a great artist in his own line, and married a lady of his own class.

He became famous as an engraver of sieges. The Infanta sent for him to Brussels at the time the Marquis de Spinola was besieging Breda, that he might draw and engrave the taking of that town. In 1628 he went to Paris, and engraved for Louis XIII. several other sieges, especially that of La Rochelle. With his own Sovereign he was a great favourite. War broke out between his country and France, and Nancy was taken by the French. Louis desired the artist to engrave for him the siege and capture of his native city. He refused, declaring that he could not bear to use his art as a means of recording the downfall and ruin of his country. The King was disappointed ; and one of the courtiers indignantly declared that the Lorrainer ought to be compelled to obey the behest of the conqueror. "Nay," replied Callot, firmly ; "I will rather disable my right hand, than it shall do anything contrary to my honour."

As is so frequently the case (thanks to the latent nobleness God has engrafted in nearly every heart), the monarch's admiration was won by the bold patriotism of this speech. He offered Callot 3,000 livres annually if he would engage in his service ; but the engraver refused. He could not and would not serve the enemy of his country. He withdrew into privacy and poverty, in which he died, leaving not only his fame as an artist, but the nobler record of disinterested loyalty and dauntless patriotism.

Another artist—one whose labours in the illustration of books were greater than any, perhaps, yet noticed—glides from the past, and claims a place in our paper,—the brave-hearted, honourable, and most unfortunate Hollar.

Wenceslaus Hollar was born at Prague, in Bohemia, in 1607. He was intended for the law, but the capture and sacking of his native city, in 1619, drove him finally into exile, and rendered it needful for him to win his bread by other means. At eighteen years of age he was well known as an artist, and Lord Arundel, at that time ambassador at the Court of Ferdinand II., formed a great friendship for him, and took him with him to England. He was introduced by his noble patron to the King, Charles I., and engaged as master in the art of design to the Prince of Wales. That same year appeared one of his most valued picture-books, "*Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus*"—representations of the dress of Englishwomen of every rank.

Lord Arundel returned to the Continent, leaving Hollar thus favourably placed. But the Civil War broke out, and the engraver's devotion to the Royal Family rendered him obnoxious to the Parliament.

Hollar was taken prisoner at the surrender of Basing House, and escaped with difficulty from the captivity in which the Puritans held him. Flying from distracted England, he took refuge with his first patron at Antwerp. But the Earl was ordered the air of Italy for his health, and probably no longer possessed the power to take his former *protégé* with him.

Hollar remained at Antwerp in greater poverty than he had yet known. Very sad is the brief record left us of his life while there. He worked for the booksellers of the city for a bare pittance, without the wish or means of bettering his lot; consoling himself in his brief hours of leisure by etching portraits of the noble friends to whom he had so loyally attached himself.

But the Restoration came, and, full of hope, Hollar returned to England. His royal pupil—his former patrons—would doubtless reward his faithful devotion. Alas! the poor artist from another land was still to share the common fate of his adopted party. The impoverished cavaliers were left poor; and Hollar could find plenty of work, but small pay. However, he struggled on, and worked earnestly and conscientiously.

The booksellers were still his patrons. One can scarcely believe the well-attested fact that they paid this great artist only fourpence an hour for his work! So honourably did the poor gentleman fulfil his part of the compact, that he worked with an hour-glass on the table; and if interrupted (even by his employers on their own business), would lay the glass on its side to stay the fall of the sands! So much honesty and industry ought not to have failed of their reward. But Hollar's fate was cast in troubled times, and he is one of many overlooked and forgotten instances in which success has *not* attended the efforts of the deserving;—a fact not to be forgotten in the days when it is too apt to be taken as the evidence

of merit. The great plague came, and both booksellers' and artists' trades were ended. The fire of London followed, and poor Hollar's little remaining property perished in the flames. Starvation threatened him, for no one had money or inclination for "picture-books" in the midst of these great calamities.

Stent, the bookseller, took (according to Vertue) a shocking advantage of his destitution, and got him to draw and engrave two large plates of "Greenwich" for the paltry sum of thirty shillings. It is painful to record this story.

But a ray of hope dawned on him. The Government gave him a commission to take a sketch of the fortifications and country round Tangiers. The offer was eagerly accepted. Hollar sailed for Africa, drew the town beneath the fierce rays of an African sun, narrowly escaped becoming a captive and slave to the Turks, and returned to England to receive a hundred pounds for his drawing, and to be again left to neglect and forgetfulness. But,—

" Although the day be never so long,
At length it ringeth to evensong."

The aged artist lay on his bed dying—it was the only article of furniture left in his denuded rooms—but a hope was now before him which would not be disappointed; his rest had come! . . . Two men entered his apartment: they were bailiffs come to distrain for rent. The old man raised his head, and addressed them with a meek patience,—

"Wait an hour, my friends," he said; "in that time I shall want nothing more in this world. You see this bed is all I have; let me die on it in peace, and then take it."

Thus died Hollar, in Gardiner's Lane, Westminster, on the 28th of March, 1677. He is buried in the new chapel yard, St. Margaret's, Westminster. It is impossible to name or enumerate the books he embellished, or the engravings which are his work. The list of his separate plates amounts to 2,400 prints. He was very exact in affixing his cipher and the date to his engravings, and thus one of the best verifiers of historical facts has been Hollar the engraver.

He had several pupils: Ogilby's translation of Homer is illustrated by one of them, William Carter, who helped the master in his larger plates. Evelyn praises Carter's frontispiece to Ambrose Parry's works.

Thomas Dudley, also a pupil of Hollar's, illustrated Esop's life and fables.

Another engraver and illustrator of this period was William Lodge. Happily, he did not depend on his art for a subsistence. He was a man of substance, to whom it was simply an amusement and a pursuit. He and Francis Place were in the habit of wandering over the country taking sketches; on one of these excursions they were taken up as Jesuit spies, and imprisoned on the suspicion. Lodge translated and illustrated Barri's "Viaggio Pittoresco."

The "Cruikshanks" of this period was Cornelius Bega, or Begeyn, of Haarlem, who has left us all the playful pictures which belong to the era. His merry temperament was also a tender and faithful one. When the plague broke out in 1664 he refused to abandon to her fate a young girl whom he had fondly loved. He nursed her in the terrible malady, caught it of her, and died by the side of her corpse.

The popular illustrator of the century, however, seems to have been a certain DAVID LOGGAN—judging, at least, by a satirical couplet of Dryden's, who, ridiculing the conceit of a now forgotten poet, says,—

"And at the front of all his senseless plays
Makes David Loggan crown his head with bays."

Four years after the era of David Loggan, HOGARTH was born. Of him we need not speak; his name is a household word—his life familiar to us through the sparkling articles contributed by George Augustus Sala to the early numbers of the *Cornhill*.

The illustrated books of the first part of the eighteenth century are not remarkable. We recollect, however, some very curious old magazines in possession of our grandmother, the engravings in which were all in the most brilliant vermilion—very dazzling to the eyes, though the prints were admirable in point of design.

But the era of Christmas books dates very much later,—from the time when the "annuals" charmed our childish eyes, when that prolific book-illustrator, Henry Corbould (whose hereditary genius has descended to his son), employed the gravers of Finden and Heath,—when Prout, Westall, &c., delighted the lovers of picture-books by their designs in the pretty "Forget-me-nots," "Keepsakes," &c., of that day.

The number of books illustrated by the graceful pencil of H. Corbould is really astonishing. His name continually meets the eye in the writer's own library. Westall seems next in quantity of work.

Cruikshanks at length appeared on the stage, and by his wonderful caricatures undoubtedly originated the animated and expressive wood engraving of the present. The artists who helped the success of "Pickwick," *Punch*, &c., followed in his track.

And here we must pause, for time would fail us to speak of all those who charm our eyes now. Leech, Edward Corbould, Millais, &c., &c., need no mention. They have given us one of the finest and most intellectual pleasures of sense, and Christmas comes associated with the names of the artists of whom England is proud, and to whom she owes her picture-books.

THE SUBSTITUTE.

I DARE say people in England, when they read in the *Times* that the brig *Harriet*, of Liverpool, Brown, master, had been taken by the Federal cruisers in an attempt to run the Charleston blockade, carried to Boston, and condemned by the Prize Court, cared very little about so commonplace an announcement. But I, John Martin, third mate of the captured brig, cared a good deal. The loss, which was but a fleabite to the wealthy speculators who had chartered the vessel, was absolute ruin to me, since I had invested my savings in a fifth ownership of that unlucky craft. And now she was taken, *in flagrante delicto*, with rifled guns and Dartford gunpowder in her hold, quinine and percussion caps in the cabins, and the deck lumbered with saddles, sabres, and gunnycloth. We knew the game was up the instant that the Yankee war-steamer shot our mainyard away from the slings, and it was with a heavy heart that I watched the foam of the summer waves break on our counter, as we were towed triumphantly into port at the American's stern.

"A bad business!" said I to myself, in bitterness of spirit, as I kicked my heels on the quay of the old Puritan metropolis of New England, vainly looking for the employment that seemed to elude me like a will-o'-the-wisp. "A bad business! What a blockhead was I to risk my five hundred pounds—hard-earned money—in such a gambling, smuggling concern as that contraband trade is at best! I wish I'd never heard of that Carolina coast, nor——But of all babyish tricks, the most silly is to cry over spilt milk. The money's gone, and won't come back again; and if I can't get a mate's berth, why, I must take a seaman's, and be thankful."

But though I tried to say the words bravely enough, they stuck in my throat somehow, and I ended with something like a sob. Say what we may, we none of us relish coming down in the world. My own progress in the mercantile marine had been hitherto pretty satisfactory, as midshipman on board an Indiaman, third officer in a Mediterranean steam-packet, second mate of a big ship in the China trade, and then first mate of that unlucky *Harriet*. I had hopes of being appointed captain when our old skipper should retire to his cottage on shore, which would probably be in the course of half a dozen more voyages, and trusted to be able to comfort the old age of the good parents who had pinched themselves to pay for my education and premium, since we middies on board the *Royal William* paid pretty smartly for the privilege of learning our calling in so fine a three-master. And now——

But at this point in my reverie a tall, hard-featured man, whose loose black coat and high hat could not quite take away the air of a seafaring person, passed me, looking sharply at me as he did so, turned on his heel, and came back to offer me a big brown hand, and to ask what wind had blown me to Boston hard. It was old Captain Dawkins,

of the *George Washington*, whom I had known at Canton, when we were both in the China trade, and I was very glad to see a friendly face and to hear a friendly voice again. I had been wretchedly lonely in Boston, where I chanced never to have been before; and as for my old shipmates, they had speedily dispersed. Captain Brown had gone home by the next steamer, meaning to retire from active life altogether; the second mate, who had rich relations, had done the same, saying that he should be glad of a spell on shore, and the men had shipped for different ports without much ado. But officers were not in request, and I found myself a drug in the market. What was the use of my going from counting-house to counting-house, showing my testimonials, and asking for a mate's place? Nobody would have anything to say to an Englishman without capital. Indeed, Americans usually keep all posts of authority, however petty, for their own countrymen, and consider the foreigner as an inferior animal altogether.

Old Captain Dawkins was very good to me. He invited me to the snug white house, within hearing of the sea on which he had spent so much of his life, and where he dwelt in quaint comfort with his notable old wife, the model of a neat New England matron, and gave me as good a dinner and as warm a welcome as a sailor would wish to find. Then, as we smoked our cheroots in the little verandah, gay with such hardy creepers as could face the bleak air of Massachusetts, he listened with great attention to my story, knitting his bushy eyebrows the while, and presently said,—

"You're a treed oon! that air a fact, and I'm sorry for it. I don't want to sermonize, Jack Martin, about that venture of yours down south. Sailors ain't mostly politicians, and you Britishers can't be expected to hev the same feelings for the Union as we Bay State men hev got in the grain of us. So I'll say nothing—nothing but this, you've been too nigh the candle, and you've singed your wings, but men ain't moths. As for shipping here as a mate, good seaman as I know you to be, 'tain't easy. We're all kinder related to one another, and 'tis a cousin here goes for mate, and a nevey for skipper. Besides, most Yankees can clap their hands on a roll of dollar notes, and there's no ballast like that in the eyes of owners, I guess. But I've got an idea."

The captain's idea was that I should repair to New London in Connecticut, as quickly as might be, and that, backed by a letter of recommendation from himself, I should apply for the command of a small coasting vessel, a ferry sloop, plying between New London and Newport, in Rhode Island. The skipper of this little argosy had just resigned office, and the proprietor of the sloop was a friend of the kind old merchant captain's. If I were to be early in the field, my success was more than probable. And although, as Captain Dawkins very considerably said, the charge of a tiny coaster was hardly the sort of employ which a lad of spirit and seamanship would care to retain permanently, at all

events, the appointment would give me "waffle cakes and lager beer" for some months, while seeking more congenial work.

Or, if I preferred it, and was short of cash, he, Jeremiah Dawkins, would gladly lend me the passage-money for my return to England. I wrung the worthy old fellow's hand, and declined the latter offer with thanks. No, no; if I had really meant to go home, poor and dejected, to sponge upon my father's scanty means, I should at any rate have had the grace to work my passage; but to stay in America seemed more hopeful. I therefore gratefully closed with the proposal, and the railroad car soon whisked me to New London, where I took up my quarters at a cheap and quiet boarding-house, a little way out of the town, and which was mostly frequented by staid New England farmers of the better sort.

Whether I should have obtained the situation I sought it is impossible to say, for when I tried to rise on the morning after my arrival at Mrs. Pogram's establishment, I sank back helpless on my pillow, with a head as heavy as lead, limbs racked with strange pains, burning heats alternating with shivering chills, and pulses that beat like a sledge-hammer. In a word, I was "down" with fever. Whether I had brought the seeds of the disease lurking in my system from among the malaria-breeding swamps and sandbars of South Carolina, where we had lain for some days, with the hatches battened down to prevent our escape, or whether agitation and despondency had been at the root of the evil, I cannot tell; but I was very ill and helpless. I recovered, and more quickly than patients generally do, thanks to my strong constitution, and the care that was taken of me, but of course by that time the ferry sloop had a new commander.

I had been kindly nursed, and felt very grateful to the good creatures who had taken so much trouble to tend a stranger like myself. Mrs. Pogram, the worthy widow who was queen and mistress of the boarding-house, Miss Grace Pogram, and a coloured woman, who did a large part of the housework, but who deserted kitchen and laundry to look after the comforts of the sick Englishman, had all been most attentive in their several ways. New England women of the true bustling stock, great in cooking, greater with needle and flat iron, are perhaps even more thoroughly in their element in a sick-room than elsewhere. Thus I was able to believe that Mrs. Pogram spoke the truth when she said, in her quick, tart way, that I had "no call" to thank her so much, for that it was her nature to "tidy up" any one who was down with "fever an' agy," and that her Samaritanship was an instinct. And the black matron, Phoebe, really possessed that feeling of its being a pleasure and a privilege to attend to the requirements of a sufferer, always on the condition that that sufferer should have a white skin, and no taint of negro blood, which is one of the most puzzling peculiarities of the African stock. But Grace——

Grace was a very pretty girl, pale, of course, but not so pale as the delicately nurtured ladies of New York and Boston, and with bright eyes,

a lively manner, which contrasted pleasantly in moments of mirth with the demure quietness of bearing which this young descendant of the Puritans had imbibed from education, and the figure of a sylph. It was wonderful to look at Mrs. Pogram,—tall, gaunt, and grim,—and to remember that Grace was the daughter of so angular and stiff-backed a parent. But in America good looks are a more transient possession than in our own moist climate, and youth is brief indeed. Grace Pogram, however, appeared to possess other beauties than such as are merely skin deep. She was clever, industrious, and amiable, sang hymns in the sweetest little thrilling voice, like the warble of a skylark, used her needle with a skill that satisfied her mother, who was a judge of stitches, and was always in the best of tempers. So good a daughter, as it seemed to me, would surely make a good wife, and I already began to dream of the joy that it would be to take Grace home with me to old England. How proud and fond would my poor mother at home be of such a daughter-in-law! and how pleasant would be the companionship of that bright-faced American girl to the old folks when I should be away on a voyage! No doubt—thanks to that luckless business of the blockade running—I was poor as Job, but before long I should hear of some fresh opportunity of realizing a sufficient income, and then all would go well, if I could but persuade Grace to think as I did.

These thoughts occupied my mind pretty fully during my convalescence, but for my very life I could not make out whether Grace liked me or not. Sometimes I caught her dove-like eyes fixed upon me with an expression of pitying interest; and when I chanced to look round, the widow's daughter would turn away with a slight blush and a dropping of the dark eyelashes that became her wonderfully. But at other times I was rather piqued by the frank and sisterly simplicity of Grace's manner, and I grew horribly jealous of every man, young or middle-aged, who approached her, as if all the world were in a conspiracy to rob me of the coveted treasure. But Grace did not seem to be much beset by admirers. People in the barren little New England States have generally a cautious eye to the main chance, and it was undeniable that Grace was no heiress. Indeed, somehow, Mrs. Pogram, with all her thrift and industry, was very far from being a wealthy woman. Her boarding-house brought in enough to feed and clothe herself and daughter and the helps, but nothing more; for such small savings as she had were periodically devoured by a scapegrace son, always erring and always forgiven, and who was understood to be a "drummer," or commercial traveller, somewhere to the southward. Mrs. Pogram had, therefore, no dowry to bestow on Grace, and the prudent swains of New London held back.

There was one young man, however, who came a great deal oftener to the house than I saw any necessity for his doing, the rather that he was a good-looking fellow, though somewhat slim and puny in a physical point of view. His name was Reuben Dart, and I believe he was a sort of fore-

man or head carpenter in some shipbuilder's yard. His mother was a friend and gossip of Grace's mother, and frequently came to drink tea and discuss general topics, among which the merits of her son were by no means omitted. I, for one, was not inclined at first to be very well pleased with these visitors. Mrs. Pogram was a sterling good woman, though not an agreeable one;—*that* I knew from grateful recollections of her care during the uneasy hours of sickness;—but Mrs. Dart did not please me. She was more smooth than her friend, but there was something false and hypocritical in her tone and smile, while her talk was too much interlarded with scripture to please British ears. Nor did I much like Reuben. He was, in my opinion, something of a milksop, and a good deal of a puppy. His small black eyes never seemed willing to meet mine, but now and then I surprised them watching me in a stealthy fashion that I was at a loss to account for. The youngster had never been farther from home than Boston, but he had read a good deal, was a fluent talker, and, to do him justice, was well educated and accomplished. That a shipbuilder's foreman should play the flute and piano, draw prettily, sing Italian songs, and model in clay and wax, may seem singular; but instruction is cheap in New England, and Americans of Reuben's class have often been taught many ornamental arts.

This is not a love story, and I must not linger too long on preliminaries. It is sufficient to say that my instinctive jealousy of Reuben Dart wore off as I perceived that the young man paid no marked attention to Grace Pogram—at least, in my presence. He seldom or never came to the house, except with his mother; and when he was in the parlour of that select establishment, he seemed more desirous of showing off his own acquirements for the admiration of the general company than of captivating the fancy of the pretty girl who alone appeared worthy of such efforts. To me he was always civil, and, instead of exalting his own country over “rotten old England,” as his compatriots were so fond of doing, spoke respectfully of the laws and institutions of Great Britain.

“Some of our citizens call you folks to home a set of downtrodden slaves, Mr. Martin,” he would say, “but you whip us in some points of practical freedom. I don't suppose you Britishers would tolerate such an iniquity as this conscription of ours,—this forcing men to be soldiers in a war we are sick of, and levying a blood-tax on the land.”

Reuben Dart had, indeed, some reason for feeling strongly on this particular subject. The levy was being vigorously pushed on, at that very time, throughout the north-eastern States, and Colonel Zerubbabel Wilks, with his regiment, had arrived in New London for the purpose of enforcing the draft, in case of resistance being offered to the Commissioners. Men must be had to feed the dragon of war, and bounties had long since failed of their primitive effect. There had been much growling and talk of armed opposition on the part of the labouring population of the little seaport, but the presence of Wilks and his Zouaves,

coupled with the knowledge that Colonel Schurtzer and his marauding regiment of Germans, renowned for their lax discipline and rough treatment of civilians, were encamped on the banks of the Connecticut River, caused the discontent to evaporate in harmless grumbling. The ballot went on unimpeded, and Reuben Dart's name was the very first that was drawn out of the fatal urn.

By this time I was so far recovered as to be perfectly ready for work. I had never been used to idleness, and even the pleasure of being in Grace's society could not reconcile me to a life of lazy inaction. Moreover, my purse was waxing low, and it was necessary that I should do something to replenish it. A Californian clipper was expected at Boston in six or eight weeks, and Captain Dawkins wrote me word that he had recommended me to her owners, who were likely to want a new mate to sail on the next voyage. But it was needful that I should earn something in the interim, and I was offered the temporary charge of a canal boat on the Connecticut River. The present commander of that tiny bark had occasion to visit the West, and his brother in New London struck a bargain with me to undertake his duties during his absence.

I prepared, therefore, to set off to Hartford,—a little inland place to which there is, as yet, no direct railway from New London. I had just returned from securing my place in the coach, when I found the trim and quiet parlour of the boarding-house a scene of unprecedented confusion, Mrs. Dart in hysterics, her friends consoling her with strong tea and good advice, Reuben looking sheepish and awkward, the two or three farmers and master mariners taking their eternal pipes from their mouths to utter words of sympathy, and Grace sitting apart, with flushed cheeks and eyes that glittered through angry tears, drumming on the floor with her little foot, but quite silent. The news of Reuben's having been drawn for military service had just reached them, and the explosion of grief, rage, and consternation was the more violent for the contrast it afforded to the calm restraint of the usual manners of the natives of the "down east" States.

My arrival, somehow, seemed to produce a sobering effect on the circle. A hush succeeded to the clamorous laments that I had heard on entering, and I could not help feeling that I was *de trop*. I did not leave the room, however, without expressing the sympathy I really felt, trite enough, I dare say, but genuine. I had quite forgotten my own antipathy to the tall and slender young dandy of the dockyard, and merely looked on him as a well-disposed lad, about to be cruelly torn from his family by the decree of arbitrary power, and very likely doomed to fill a bloody and nameless grave on some Southern battle-field. I was sorry for Reuben, and angry at the tyranny that forced him into a profession so perilous and so ill suited to his nature.

But when I had taken a brisk walk to quiet my nerves, and was coming slowly homeward, listening to the harsh croak of the bullfrogs and the cry of the night-birds that were flapping among the brakes and patches

of woodland, I began to marvel at the scene I had witnessed. After all, there were wide meshes in the net of that cruel law of conscription to which Reuben had fallen a prey. The drafted man might escape, as being unfit for service. One half-inch below the standard, a curved spine, a narrow chest, would warrant the medical inspector in refusing the recruit. But no; Reuben was tall and shapely,—not muscular, but quite able to march and fight. Again, he could buy his freedom for three hundred dollars. A moderate price, after all, and one that could be furnished by many conscripts of the middle, and some even of the working class; and yet, if young Dart had the wherewithal to purchase his exemption, why should there have been so many tears and so much distress? I could not understand it.

On my return to the boarding-house I found matters going on quietly, but in a vein of settled sadness. Grace was not to be seen. She had a headache, and had gone early to rest. Mrs. Dart and her son had left. Mrs. Pogram was the only person visible, save the farmers and master mariners, who had returned to their pipes of negrohead and their local newspapers; and Mrs. Pogram was more incoherent and mystic in her discourse than I had ever known her to be. Supper, under these circumstances, was but a melancholy meal, and I went to bed in unusually low spirits, and had strange dreams of trouble and perplexity, in which Grace and Reuben Dart were peculiarly active. Morning came, and I descended in due course to take my share of the mush and milk coffee, the slap-jacks, hot bread, pies, clams, whitefish, pumpkins, and stewed oysters of an American breakfast. But still no Grace was to be seen.

I packed my slender luggage, I wished a civil farewell to the other boarders under Mrs. Pogram's roof, and got one of the helps to call a porter to carry my traps. Then I went to the little bar to bid adieu to my worthy hostess, and to thank her for her care of me when I lay sick and powerless, so far from my kindred. Mrs. Pogram, to my surprise, took my thanks and parting words with the worst possible grace. She really seemed ashamed, somehow, of her past kindness; and my gratitude—clumsily expressed, I dare say, by my awkward English tongue—seemed to make her uncomfortable. She had done no more, she said, than she would do for any sick Christian. Where was her daughter? Grace was out on business. Perhaps I should meet her. She knew Annie would like to shake hands before I went. That was all, and it was said in a grating, dry tone, as if I had unwittingly given offence; and Mrs. Pogram looked at her ledger, at my waistcoat, out of window—everywhere but in my face, as she uttered the words of her cold “good-bye.”

It was with a heavy heart that I trudged beside the Irishman who carried my baggage, and I could not explain to my own satisfaction the change that had come over my late entertainers. Motherly Mrs. Pogram so chilly and unfriendly, Grace absent, the whole household upset by the occurrence of the previous evening, what sort of lesson ought I to draw

from that? But scarcely had I reached the coach office before a light foot-fall resounded on the pavement, a little hand was laid timidly upon my arm, and a sweet girlish face looked up towards mine, while a soft voice exclaimed reproachfully,—

"Captain Martin, I never thought it of you! Leaving the town, leaving our house in such a hurry that you haven't time to bid farewell to your old friends—forgetting poor little me!"

Never had I seen Grace look half so pretty. The rapidity of her course through the streets had given her rounded cheek the glow and flush of rosy bloom that English maidens so often, and American maidens so rarely, possess; and as she stood before me, breathless from her unworried exertions, with her shining hair, her neat and tasteful attire, and real tears glistening in her bright eyes, I felt a sharp pang at the thought of losing her. She took my offered arm, and we walked for a few minutes to and fro beneath the wayside elms, while the negro helpers were harnessing the team. Grace was wonderfully captivating that morning; yet, with all the seeming caprice and genuine tact in which women excel the best of us, she contrived to check the warm declaration of attachment which rose to my lips, and monopolized nearly all the conversation.

She, Grace Pogram, had learned to like me so well, and to esteem me so much, that she should always be truly glad to hear of my success in life,—ay, glad as if I were her brother. She would not listen to my broken protests that my feelings towards herself were not fraternal by any means, but hurriedly went on to talk of the conscription and Reuben Dart. Reuben, she said, was a neighbour's child, an old playmate of hers; a worthy young man, for whom her mother had a regard; and the Pograms were shocked that such a misfortune as being drawn for the army should have befallen him. Reuben, she said, was the best of sons, the bread-winner of the family; since old Dart was paralytic, and Mrs. Dart had but a poor little shop that brought in scanty profit. There were heavy doctor's bills for the bedridden old man; there was a blind sister in the asylum, whose clothing had to be paid for out of Reuben's earnings. The young man had good wages, but he had never been able to save,—never. His being drawn for a soldier was ruin. The Pograms pitied the Darts sincerely.

Well, pity is said to be akin to love, but I gradually felt the welcome assurance stealing upon my heart that Grace was not in love with the handsome young foreman. Her voice when she spoke of him was so kind, yet so frank and steady, her compassion for "poor Rube" so open and honest, that I soon perceived the truth. Grace was sorry for her mother's friend, about to be left of her only son; sorry for her old playfellow, in danger of death or mutilation; and whose liberty was forfeited, since he could not pay the pecuniary fine which to a rich man was the merest trifle. But I felt ashamed of having so unworthily suspected Grace of a secret understanding with the young conscript. On the contrary, there was a

timid glance in her tearful eyes, a trembling in her clear voice, when she addressed me personally or spoke of my prospects, that seemed to betray more than common interest in my fate and welfare. I do not think I am vainer than my fellows, but no other impression could be derived from Grace's manner.

Grace had, however, a favour to beg of me. Reuben Dart could not buy his discharge, but he might put in a claim to exemption. He was the only support of a bedridden parent, the real head of the family. He was delicate of constitution, and not fit for the rough work of campaigning. And he had some time before been hurt in the left wrist by some slip of an adze,—a slight out, but the arm was often stiff and painful. A memorial setting forth all this had been drawn up by their kind friend, good Dr. Marsh. He lived in that very street, ten doors off. Would I be so very generous and obliging as to sign that document, attesting Reuben's merits, his father's helpless state, the injury to his wrist (I had seen the scar when we played loo), and the other facts? Would I do that favour to the Darts and their friends the Pograms? There were plenty of native witnesses, but an Englishman's testimony would have much weight with the Federal authorities.

It is hard to refuse when a good and pretty girl is the petitioner, and in a surprisingly short time I found myself in Dr. Marsh's parlour, while the doctor—a tall, bald-headed man, with twinkling eyes and dirty wrist-bands—was hunting in a drawer for the "memorial;" and Grace was setting pen and ink before me, chattering all the while in her lively yet earnest way. At last Doctor Marsh found the official-looking document, handsomely engrossed on paper topped by the eagle of the United States, and proceeded smilingly to ask me a question or two.

I was English, and a seafaring gentleman?—Just so. Twenty-four or five, if he might guess?—Twenty-six, dear me! Five feet ten inches, Dr. Marsh would bet a dozen of Catawba that I was not under the height he had named. Ah, trust an old doctor; and *what* a chest! Few Yankees measured so much in girth under the arm-pits. There was nothing like a Britisher for substance and power, after all was said and done.

Grace smiled, and whispered to me that the good doctor was something of a character. Twang! twang! went the horn of the coach, and a grinning negro popped his head in at the open window to say that massa would be left behind unless he pulled foot tartation quick. Hastily I signed the memorial; hastily, but fondly, I pressed Grace's hand, and the gentle pressure was returned. Thirty seconds more, and the coach was bumping over the bad pavement, and I was one of the passengers.

I had left New London without speaking my mind, but then my absence was only temporary. I had no intention of spending my life in the unambitious task of navigating the Connecticut River. So soon as the *Swiftsure* should come into Boston Harbour from California, Dawkins

was to summon me. And I meant to take New London on my way, and to ask Grace to plight her troth in exchange for mine.

In the interim I buckled heartily to my new duties, took charge of the canal boat—a queer, deeply laden scow, gaudy with paint, and manned by a rough lad from the Vermont mountains, two negroes, a lean, muscular Marylander, and a deserter from one of the British regiments in Canada. There was not one sailor among the lot, but the work required was rather that of a carrier or porter than of a mariner, and after a little practice I got into the routine of river voyaging. My crew were rather too fond of shirking work, and a good deal too partial to liquor, but I contrived to keep them in tolerable order; and the owner declared that the trips had never been more punctually made, nor the cargoes better delivered. About three weeks passed away, and I began to wonder at receiving no answer to a letter I had addressed to Grace, when my doubts were resolved pretty effectually.

We were off Hartford, with the quay a plank's length from our gunwale, and I was still asleep in the neat little cabin that formed the exclusive domain of the canal boat's captain, when a violent trampling on deck, accompanied by a roar of many voices, aroused me. What could have happened? I knew that my men would not have begun loading cargo until I should myself call them up from their lair in the forecabin. Was the scow on fire? I sprang out of bed, and hurriedly fringed on my clothes; but before I could open the little painted door of my cabin, it was dashed in by a couple of heavy blows such as only the butt-end of a musket can inflict, and a sergeant, followed by two soldiers, rushed in, and presenting the point of his drawn sword to my throat, bade me in broken English—

“Surrender, and be hanged to me, for a rashcal deserter!”

“A deserter! I a deserter! From whom or what?” cried I, rubbing my eyes to make sure that I was awake. But the German non-commissioned officer deigned no further explanation than was comprised in an unflattering allusion to “lying schelms,” and bade his men “bring me along,” since Colonel Schurtzer would be impatient. And without giving me time to remonstrate or resist, I was seized, ironed, and dragged first on deck and then ashore, with a bayonet on either flank, to urge my progress should I prove recalcitrant. Early as it was, a crowd of slipshod women and rough men had gathered to gape at the “deserter,” and the boys of Hartford hooted me unmercifully as I progressed towards the colonel's quarters. I was soon ushered into the presence of Colonel Schurtzer, a grisly warrior, who was already smoking his meerschaum over a cup of strong black coffee, laced with whiskey, and who wore a greasy red cap with a full blue tassel, and was in shirt sleeves, lolling on a sofa covered with pale blue silk. The room had been daintily furnished in the French taste, no doubt as a lady's drawing-room, the owner being probably absent in Europe or the South, but its finery was sadly the worse for the slovenly habits of the present tenant.

Colonel Schurtzer spoke very little English, but he had in his vocabulary a few choice terms of abuse, which he showered upon me pell-mell with some strong expressions in High Dutch; the gist of the whole being that I was a deserter from the army of the United States, that my whereabouts had been telegraphed, that I was to be sent under escort to the headquarters of my regiment, and that I was a "tarn rascal," who merited the schlaget and the strappado for the trouble I gave.

In vain I pleaded that there was some gross mistake. I was neither believed nor listened to. I was merely asked if my name were Martin, and if I had not lately been at New London. And on my replying in the affirmative, the military judge merely puffed out an extra volume of smoke, and growled out the words,—

"Fort! away! Sergeant, dake away te yellow at once. Opey your orders."

And in less than a minute I found myself making a progress through the streets, chained, guarded by two files of soldiers, and the object of the pity, abhorrence, or derision of the numerous spectators. The women usually showed some compassion, but the children jeered me with the thoughtlessness of their age, and several of the men abused me for a skulking Britisher. Among these last was my late employer, who shook his fist in my face, and cursed me as a "madder-dyed, double-faced villain." The word "Traitor!" assailed me on all sides, and I really felt like one who passes through the hideous phantasmagoria of a nightmare. What, in the name of common sense, did it all mean?

I was glad to be clear of Hartford, but the long, hot, and dusty march was painful and distressing. My escort, however, did not wilfully maltreat me. On the contrary, they clapped me good-naturedly on the shoulder, offered me some biscuit and a drink from a canteen, and did not refuse to allow me at my own expense to hire a light waggon, in which we all took our places, and which would at least serve to abridge the weary journey to New London, since that was the goal of this enforced pilgrimage. The one thing the Germans could not or would not tell me was, why or how I was classed as a "deserter." They evidently regarded me as a sly fellow, shook their heads, and refused to discuss the point.

A mile or two out of New London we met a sergeant and four men of the American Zouaves, and to their custody I was committed by my German captors. A few hasty words of greeting, a friendly passing round of a black bottle of the national nectar, and then the Germans turned back; while the party of Wilks's regiment, who had been spared a long tramp to the original place of meeting, halfway to Hartford, faced about to return to the town, with myself in the midst of them. Again I pressed the question as to my offence, sure as I was that I was a mere scapegoat, the victim of a mistaken identity. But the sergeant merely turned his quid, and bade me "step out," on pain of being pricked into activity with a bayonet.

"Bilking, scampish rowdies you deserters are," said he, in a tone of disgust. "But of all the loafing sneaks unhung, you, Britisher, air the worst. You've had your cash, and spent it. We've got you, and we'll keep you, or my name ain't Calch."

I said no more. Either I must be mad, or the military and citizens of Hartford and New England must be fit candidates for Bedlam. I resolved to waste no more words, but to wait until I reached the town, where I had no doubt of being immediately released. But what was my horror, in passing through the streets of New London, to see a crowd, as large as the one which attended my ignominious progress, gathered about the door of the principal church, and in the centre of that crowd Grace Pogram! Grace—but how changed from the tearful girl who had followed me to the coach office on the day of my departure! The widow's daughter, radiant but demure, in the prettiest of white bonnets, white shawls, white gowns, was leaning on the arm of Reuben Dart, whose habiliments were all suspiciously new, and of a fashionable cut. There were carriages in waiting; there were friends of both sexes, among whom I recognized Mrs. Pogram and Mrs. Dart; there was a general medley of white roses and riband favours, of holiday clothes and faces, giggling girls, men half smiling, half sheepish—all the adjuncts of a wedding.

A wedding! My eyes grew dim for a moment, and I leaned heavily on the nearest soldier for support. The odious clash of the bells, as they struck up a joy-peal, saluted the bridal party, and served to force the hateful truth upon me. At the same instant, and as Reuben extended his arm to hand Grace into the carriage, the bride looked up, recognized the face of the manacled prisoner close by, and flushed scarlet, while her eyes were lowered as if ashamed to meet mine. It was but for an instant, and in the next she glanced indifferently at me, as at a stranger, and was handed, all smiles and blushes, into the vehicle. As for Reuben, he did not see me at all, or, if he did, he kept his countenance well. The carriages drove off, followed by a cheer from the mob, and my escort moved on again, while I mechanically tramped with them through the streets, stupefied and dull of brain, like one who has received a crushing blow.

At the marshal's office I recovered my wits sufficiently to demand by what right I was thus kidnapped, and on what grounds I was treated as a deserter. But here a new surprise awaited me. I was curtly informed that on the twenty-first day of the previous month, I, John Martin, mariner, age twenty-seven, height five feet ten, had been accepted as a substitute for the drafted conscript, Reuben Dart. I had passed the medical inspection of a qualified surgeon, Dr. Marsh, whose certificate was appended to the register of my case. And I was briefly informed, that having, no doubt, spent or gambled away the money I had received from Reuben Dart for serving in his stead, I had concealed myself at Hartford, in hopes of escaping the legal consequences of my agreement, on which account I was reckoned as a deserter, and should be punished by extra

drill, with ball and chain, and then handed over to my regiment—Wilks's Zouaves.

"I signed no such paper," said I, indignantly.

But the marshal spread out before my eyes a paper, topped by the American eagle, and pointed to my signature at the bottom. It was the document I had set my name to, the "memorial" that was to procure exemption from military service for Grace's interesting young friend, and which in the hurry of starting I had taken on trust. But to my horror I found it to be a solemn agreement, whereby I became the substitute for the original conscript, and bound myself to do duty as a soldier in the armies of the Federal Government. In vain I protested that my signature had been obtained by fraud and collusion on the part of Dr. Marsh and the cruel little traitress, Grace Pogram. I was disbelieved, and the marshal merely directed my removal to that part of the jail devoted to military offenders.

The fortnight which followed was wretched enough, but I was allowed to communicate with my friends, and the exertions of Captain Dawkins, backed by the British consul at Boston, finally procured my release. Had I not been a subject of the Queen of England, I do not think that the authorities, greedy as they were for recruits, would so easily have parted with their prize.

"A smart trick!" said the old captain, chuckling, in spite of his native honesty and good-nature, over this new proof of the adroitness of his countrymen,— "a smart trick, but a shabby one, I admit. I've seen the girl, and I've seen her husband, and the rest of 'em; and they laugh some over the matter, they do; but they can't deny you were on fairly dealt with. You see, Grace and young Dart were engaged to be married, and all the cash both families could scrape up had gone to buy Reuben a partnership in his master's business. They couldn't pay the three hundred dollars without mortgaging Ma'am Pogram's house, which didn't suit, so Grace undertook to get a substitute on cheaper terms, d'ye see?"

"Yes, I see!" answered I, wincing, for my eyes were now pretty well opened. But the old skipper proved a true friend, for, thanks to him, I got the desired berth on board the Californian clipper, of which I am first officer, with every prospect of one day commanding a ship of my own.

THE SCIENCE OF GOOD CHEER.

PART II.

THE culinary science, which had remained stationary during the sway of Madame de Maintenon, rose under the Regency. Fortunately, there were men of taste on both sides of the Channel, who made art minister to other purposes than vanity, and amongst these the Regent Duke of Orleans most signally distinguished himself. His *petits soupers* conferred a celebrity on the scene of them, which it still preserves ;—sufficiently to justify the reply of the Frenchman, who, on being asked by a stranger in a remote part of Europe if he could tell him the direction of Paris, made answer, “*Monsieur, ce chemin-là vous conduira au Palais Royal.*” There is a vague tradition that the *chef* of the Regent was pre-eminent in a *dinde aux truffes*. Louis XV., amidst all his other luxuries, was not unmindful of that which, it has been sagaciously observed, harmonizes with all other pleasures, and remains to console us for their loss. Louis XVI. is said to have been somewhat neglectful of his table, which may have been one amongst the many causes of his fall ; for, as Johnson very properly observes, a man who is careless about his table will generally be found careless in other matters. Louis XVIII. was a gastronome of the first water, and had the Duke d’Escar for his grand *maître d’hôtel*, a man whose fortunes were hardly on a par with his deserts. He died inconsolable at not having given his name to a single dish, after devoting his whole life to the culinary art. When his best friends wished to wound him mortally, they had only to mention the *veau à la Béchamel*. “Gentlemen,” he would exclaim, “say no more about it, or fancy me the author and inventor of the dish.”

The Revolution at its commencement bid fair to bring back a long night of barbarism upon art ; and the destruction of the pre-existing races of Amphitryons and diners out was actually and most efficiently accomplished by it. As some compensation, again, for the injurious influence of the Revolution in its first stages upon cookery, it is right to mention that it contributed to emancipate the *cuisine* from prejudice, and added largely to its resources.

About the year 1770, after the glorious days of the reign of the *Grand Monarque*, the *roueries* of the Regency, and the long tranquillity of the ministry of Cardinal Fleury, travellers arriving in Paris had few places where they could get a good dinner. They had to put up at hotels, generally bad. A few had *table d’hôtels*, which, however, only just offered what was necessary for a meal, and moreover were at *fixed* hours. There were a few “*traiteurs*,” but they had usually nothing but joints ; and a man who wished to give a dinner to his friends was obliged to order it beforehand : so that those who had not the good luck to have an introduction into opulent houses had to leave the capital without becoming

acquainted with the resources and delicacies of a Parisian kitchen. At last, a man of *voir* was found, who took the subject into consideration. He argued that, as the same wants occurred at about the same hour every day, people would not fail to come, if they found themselves readily and well served; that if one man had a wing of chicken, the next comer would take the leg, and so on; that a slice from a prime joint would not spoil the remainder; and that a man who found he got a good dinner would not grumble at a little expense, if promptly served and well waited upon; and that a *carte*, with fixed prices for every dish, would be suitable to every purse. The innovator did not stop here, but developed his idea still further. This was Champ d'Oiseau, *Rue des Poulies*, who commenced business in 1770. He was the first *restaurateur*, and created a profession which leads to fortune whenever the professor is honest, and combines order with skill. In 1789 the number of *restaurateurs* in Paris had increased to a hundred; in 1804 (the date of the first appearance of the *Almanach des Gourmands*), to five or six hundred; and it now considerably exceeds a thousand.

It now seems allowed on all hands, that a first-rate dinner in England is out of all comparison better than a dinner of the same class in any other country; for we get the best cooks, as we get the best singers and dancers, by bidding highest for them, and we have cultivated certain national dishes to a point which makes them the envy of the world. In proof of this bold assertion, which is backed, moreover, by the unqualified admission of Ude, we would instance the *menu* of the dinner given some years since to Lord Chesterfield, on his quitting the office of Master of the Buckhounds, at the Clarendon. The party consisted of thirty; the price was six guineas a head; and the dinner was ordered by the late Comte d'Orsay, who stood without a rival amongst connoisseurs in this department of art.

PREMIER SERVICE.

Potages.—Printanier : à la Reine : *turtle* (two *tureens*).

Poissons.—Turbot (*lobster and Dutch sauces*) : salmon à la Tartare : rougets à la Cardinal : friture de morue : *white-bait*.

Relevés.—Filet de bœuf à la Napolitaine : dindon à la chipolata : timbale de macaroni : *haunch of venison*.

Entrées.—Croquettes de volaille : petits pâtés aux huîtres : cotelettes d'agneau : purée de champignons : cotelettes d'agneau aux pois d'asperge : fricandeau de veau à l'oseille : ris de veau piqué aux tomates : cotelettes de pigeons à la Dusselle : chartreuse de légumes aux faisans : filets de canetons à la Bigarrade : boudins à la Richelieu : sauté de volaille aux truffes : pâté de mouton monté.

SECOND SERVICE.

Rôts.—Chapons, quails, turkey poult, *green goose*.

Entre-mets.—Asperges : haricots à la Française : mayonnaise d'homard :

gelée Macédoine : aspices d'œufs de pluvier : Charlotte Russe : gelée au Marasquise : crème marbre : corbeille de pâtisserie : vol-au-vent de rhubarbe : tourte d'abricots : corbeille de meringues : dressed crab : salade au gélatine.—Champignons aux fines herbes.

Relevés.—Soufflée à la vanille : Nesselrode pudding : Adelaide sandwiches : fondus. Pièces montées, &c., &c., &c.

The judicious critic will not fail to observe how well the English dishes—turtle, white-bait, and venison—relieve the French in this dinner; and what a breadth, depth, solidity, and dignity they add to it. Green goose, also, may rank as English, the goose being held in little honour, with the exception of its liver, by the French.

Without forgetting, therefore, what we owe to French cookery, and having initiated the *cuisine* amongst us as a science, we may recall with pride the words of Ude, "I will venture to affirm that cookery in England, when well done, is superior to that of any other country in the world."*

Life and motion occasion in a living body a continual loss of substance, and the human body, that most complicated machine, would soon be out of order if Providence had not given it a mentor to warn it of the moment when its powers are no longer in equal balance with its wants. That monitor is *appetite*. The word implies the first impression of the desire to eat. "The food consumed by man," observes Mr. Buckle, "produces two, and only two, effects necessary to his existence. These are—first, to supply him with that animal heat, without which the functions of life would stop; and, secondly, to repair the waste and wear-and-tear of daily life constantly taking place in his tissues,—that is, in the mechanism of his frame. For each of these separate purposes there is a separate food."

The objects of food are, therefore, only two; namely, to keep up the warmth of the body, and repair the waste in the tissues. Thus the distinctive quality of food consists in the property of undergoing animal assimilation.

The animal kingdom and the vegetable kingdom are the realms which have hitherto provided food to the human species. As yet, nothing has been extracted from minerals but remedies or poisons.

Since analytic chemistry has become an adopted science, great steps in advance have been made in ascertaining the double nature of the elements of which the human body consists, and in discovering the substances which nature seems to have destined to restore the losses it sustains.

There is great analogy between these studies, as man consists in a great measure of the same substances as the animals upon which he feeds, and it becomes necessary to endeavour to discover in vegetables affinities susceptible of animalization.

* We learn from Fynes Moryson, who wrote his "Itinerary" in 1617, that the English cooks were then reckoned superior to all others in the department of roastings.

In these two branches the most praiseworthy, and at the same time most minute investigations have been undertaken, and an analysis has been made as well of the human body as of the food which sustains it,—first in their secondary principles, and then in their elements, beyond which there is a veil which we have not been permitted to penetrate.*

The greatest service rendered by chemistry to alimentary science is the discovery, or rather the precise knowledge obtained, of "osmazome."

Osmazome is that eminently rapid portion of meat which is soluble in cold water, and which differs from that extractive portion which is only soluble in boiling water.

The merit of a good soup or broth consists in osmazome. It forms the brown (*rissolé*) on roasts, the rich gravy; it gives the flavour to venison and other game.

While these things were taking place in the laboratories of scientific men, in the dining-room it was loudly maintained that the science which nourished man was at least as valuable as that which taught how to destroy him. For, certes, to discuss the results of a well-handled *batterie de cuisine* at the dinner-table is far more agreeable than to examine those in the field of Whitworth, Armstrong, or rifled guns of any calibre whatsoever. Poets, therefore, sang the pleasures of the table, and works on "good cheer" became more instructive and important. Such were the circumstances which preceded the advent of gastronomy.

Gastronomy, then, is the matured knowledge of everything which concerns man as regards his food. Its object is the preservation of man, by providing him with the best possible aliment. It succeeds in doing so by guiding, by certain principles, all those who seek, provide, or prepare food. In fact, it may be said to be the motor of the agriculturist, the vine-grower, the sportsman, the fisherman, and the great family of cooks, under whatever name they may disguise their occupation, either in the procuring or preparation of food.

Gastronomy is connected—

With Natural History, by the classification it makes of alimentary substances;

With Physics, by the examination of their composition and quality;

With Chemistry, by the different analyses and decompositions it subjects them to;

With Cookery, by the art of preparing the dishes, and making them agreeable to the taste;

With Commerce, by seeking the cheapest and best market to buy in, and an advantageous one to sell in;

* A case in the Food Department of the South Kensington Museum exhibits the various constituents of the human body classified, and affords a convenient and instructive practical illustration of this part of the subject.

Finally, with Political Economy, by the returns it brings into the Exchequer, and the means of exchange it provides to nations.

Gastronomy, indeed, rules the whole life of man : the first cries of the new-born babe are for its nurse's breast ; and a man on his death-bed swallows still with some pleasure the last potion, which, alas ! he has not the power to digest.

Moreover, it is closely linked with every class of society ; for though it presides over the banquet of a congress of kings, it also calculates the number of minutes of stalling which an egg requires.

The material subject of gastronomy is everything that can be eaten ; its direct object, the preservation of the individual ; its means of execution, —cultivation which produces, commerce which exchanges, industry which prepares, and experience which invents, the means to turn everything to the best account.

Gastronomy likewise considers *taste* in its enjoyments as well as in its drawbacks ; it has discovered the various degrees of pleasure it produces ; it has regulated their action, and has fixed limits which no man of self-respect ought to outstep.

It considers, also, the action of aliment on the moral qualities of man, on his imagination, his mind, his judgment, his courage and perceptions, whether awake or asleep, whether in motion or in repose.

It is gastronomy, again, which fixes the exact point when an article of food ought to be used, for all are not presentable under the same circumstances.

Some ought to be used before they have attained their full development, —as capers, asparagus, sucking pigs, pigeons, &c. ; others, when they have attained full maturity, —as melons, most fruits, mutton, beef, and all adult animals ; others, when decomposition commences, —as medlars, woodcocks, and especially the pheasant ; others, again, when their disagreeable qualities have been removed, —as the potato, tapioca, and others.

It is gastronomy, again, which classifies these substances according to their various qualities, and gives them their proper place at the dining-table. It devotes no less interest to beverages, classifying them according to date of vintage, climate, and locality. It teaches how to prepare and preserve them, but especially how to present them in an order so exactly calculated, that the enjoyment resulting therefrom always increases until pleasure ceases and abuse commences.

Let us now say a few words on the main difference between French and English cookery.

In France, most substances are exposed, through the medium of oil or butter, to a temperature of at least 600° Fahrenheit, by the operation of frying, or some analogous process. They are then introduced into a macerating vessel with a little water, and kept for several hours at a temperature far below the boiling point (212°), not perhaps higher than 180° ; and by these united processes, properly conducted, the most refractory

articles, whether of animal or vegetable origin, are reduced more or less to the state of pulp, and admirably adapted for the further action of the stomach. In the common cookery of this country, on the contrary, articles are usually put at once into a large quantity of water, and submitted, without care or attention, to the boiling temperature: the consequence is, that most animal substances, when taken out, are harder and more indigestible than in the natural state; for it is well known that albuminous substances (as, for example, *the white of an egg*) become the harder the longer they are boiled. These observations are often of the utmost importance in a medical point of view. When the powers of the stomach are weak, a hard and crude English diet (such, for example, as half-raw beefsteaks, &c., so frequently recommended) is sure to produce much discomfort by promoting acidity; while the very same article, well cooked upon French principles, or rather the principles of common sense, can be taken with impunity and easily assimilated by the same individual.

According to the authority of one of our ablest chemical physicians, our principal alimentary matters may be reduced to three classes, of which sugar, butter, and white of egg are the representatives. Now it is a curious circumstance that milk, the only article absolutely prepared and intended by nature as an aliment, is a compound of all these three classes; and almost all the gramineous and herbaceous matters employed as food by the lower animals contain at least two, if not all the three. The same is true of animal aliments, which consist at least of albumen and oil. In short, it is perhaps impossible to name a substance employed by the more perfect animals as food; that does not essentially constitute a natural compound of at least two, if not all three, of these great principles of alimentary matter.

Of all medical powers, diet is the most important; for it is constant by night and day, whether waking or sleeping. Its effect is renewed at every meal, and gradually exerts its influence on every portion of the individual. We all know by our own sensations how great an influence the stomach exercises over our daily happiness. Mrs. Hannah More says, in her quaint way, "There are only two bad things in this world—sin and bile." When in a perfectly healthy condition, everything goes on well—all is *couleur de rose*; on the contrary, our doctors tell us that the horrors of hypochondriasis are mainly owing to dyspepsia, or indigestion. That this is true we have no doubt, though we are not yet fully disposed to adopt the French maxim, "*Mauvais cœur, bon estomac*,"—as comprehending the requisites of physical enjoyment,—but rather that "*bien manger, bien boire, et bien dire sont à l'unison*"—hence good digestion.

From France, *restaurateurs* have spread to the rest of Europe. The institution is one of extreme advantage to every traveller or stranger, and of high importance to the universal advance of the genial science. A man can now dine at any hour he pleases, according to his appetite and

his means. He needs not dread his bill, as he knows beforehand the price of each dish which he orders. The suavity and superior manners of the French commonalty are, doubtless, in a great degree attributable to the custom of taking their meals in company, either at the restaurant or the *traiteur's*. The solitary meal is alike inimical to good digestion and good manners.

It was with much regret, therefore, that we heard Mr. Gladstone's propose to levy a tax of £17·1 yearly on clubs and similar associations. Our objection to this new impost being, that whilst it would be of no importance to the rich, it would discourage the poorer classes from uniting in little co-operative companies. "Of course," as an honourable member truly remarked in the House during debate on a recent committee of Ways and Means, "it is of no consequence to the Carlton, or the Reform, or the Athenæum, whether £17·1 be or be not paid out of their subscriptions to the assessed tax collector; but it is of very considerable importance that, for the sake of this pitiful £17·1, a restriction should be put upon the whole country." Clubs are one of the most remarkable and beneficial products of modern civilization, and their advantages are not nearly developed. Among the upper classes they exercise the same control over the conduct and deportment of men as general society exercises over the conduct of women. A man with a black mark upon his character has no chance of getting into a respectable club. A man who does a dishonourable act is expelled from his club. The clubs, with their ballots, their committees, and their power of expulsion, keep up the tone of manners in this country. They are courts of honour, as well as large families of equals. We should like to see associations exercising a like influence among the middle classes and among the workmen. We should like to see them a test of character as well as a means of comfort to the humble, as they are to the wealthy. We should like to see them taking root spontaneously in the country, and not forced as sickly exotics by the patronage of noblemen and gentlemen, whose condescension and intrusive crotchets are much more likely to repel than to attract the working classes. There is no reason why clubs should not do for the poor working man what they have done for the poor gentleman,—treble his comforts, and give him society without expense, and teach him enjoyment above the coarser indulgences which, in the last generation, disgraced all ranks alike. The clubs have not only raised or sustained our tone of morals, and improved our social tastes, but they have certainly driven away the vice of drunkenness. But the paltry demand lately proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have become an impediment to any such an extension of the club system as we hope for.

Very praiseworthy exertions are now being made to place a wholesome, well-cooked meal within the compass of a labouring man's slender purse, upon the system so successfully established of late in Glasgow; and it would be, to say the least, simply absurd to frustrate the endeavour merely for

the sake of a most meagre source of revenue. There are in London forty-two clubs, so that this new tax would bring in just £714, and perhaps twice as much more in the provinces. Cheap food and good cooking for the working man are data of a problem, the solution of which is pregnant with immense results to the community at large. "There will be some one some day—who shall he be?" pertinently inquires a publicist,—“who will immortalize himself by teaching the million the moralizing agencies of good feeding.” There will be readers tempted to turn up their noses at the expression; but we repeat it—the moralizing agencies of good feeding. Who shall he be? Who is it that will one day enable people to reach the conviction that the “art of living well,” in whatever sense taken, has a wider signification than that usually given it? Who is the benefactor who will teach his day and generation that a wise care of the body is a religious duty, not second to, but part of that which we owe to the soul? Who is he through whose instrumentality people are to have the instructions by which they may cultivate those smaller charities of life, which, placing us at ease with ourselves and the ordinations of society, tend to cultivate the most genial qualities of our nature, and fit us for those amenities of the virtues which, well understood, are the fulfilment of the law and the prophets? The opening is there; the need is, almost above all others, great; and it may be that the suggestion, which points them out in an age when the intellectual power it appeals to is not uncommon, may not fall profitlessly to the ground. It would be difficult to explain how long and how utterly we have been neglecting this most practical of all the departments of popular ethics. The old histories of England, which recall the domestic felicity and excellent morals of the “forefathers of the hamlet,” who gave to roast beef and plum pudding a national significance, and made the comfortable, fair-dealing John Bull the impersonation of our qualities as a people, suggest a secret in the moral culture of a nation that is worth some thought on the part of teachers, and some consideration on the part of governments. The moral worth, the good principles, and that best of all the proofs of a high development of manly character—the sense of fair play even in the contest of foes,—which are admitted to have distinguished us as a people centuries ago, may be easily connected with the family comforts and good living which have been always our national characteristics. The most successful of islanders have been at the same time the best fed of nations; and the rule that applies to the people applies to the individual.

S. M.

BRIDAL POETRY.

——— "*Hominum diviniq;e voluptas*;
Alma Venus!"

LUCRETIVS, "DE RERUM NATURA."

SCARCELY had Mrs. Blank and I annihilated, to our own satisfaction, the cynical and sophisticated Haggatt, and demonstrated beyond contradiction that Baby was an institution worthy to be upheld and sung about,* when our pretty Danish Princess alighted in flowers at Gravesend, and was greeted by blood royal with a smack which resounded all over the United Kingdom. Of course I went out into London streets, determined, if possible, to catch a glimpse of the pretty bride. Of course Mrs. Blank was detained at home by tiddlepops, and of course I returned home indescribably crushed and stupefied. Then ensued a conversation, part of which may be entertaining to unmarried readers.

"Well! well! well!" Three exclamations, accompanied by three eager looks of flushed inquiry, and repeated at short intervals. "*Is she pretty? Is she as pretty, as they say she is?*"

"You allude to the Princess?"

"Of course," replied Curiosity, with a pout.

"In that case, my dear," I replied, "I cannot do better than tell you what I saw, interlarding my narration by a running comment on what I felt. On pushing my way Cityward I found myself in the midst of a crowd, which gradually increased in density, until, in the Strand, I was struggling in the midst of a tempestuous ocean of human beings of all grades, from the snob down to the unsnobisticated costermonger. It was a scramble, a squeeze, a squash! With a tall gentleman's elbow in my neck, a short gentleman's elbow in my ribs, a hob-nailed party's boot on my tenderest toe, I was beaten eastward slowly, painfully, but progressively. Gradually, Emily, I lost consciousness of time, of space, of self-identity. I resembled the most infinitesimal claw of an enormous centipede. See? hear? I could not; I could only feel. This seemed to last for ages. Then I suddenly became conscious that the great crowd was shouting vociferously, and that I was shouting with the rest. The crowd eddied to and fro; horsemen and carriages swept past; I heard loud expressions of applause and admiration; I saw the tip of the Prince of Wales's nose; and I felt tortures akin to that of being crunched by the monster Ugolino jaws described in Dante."

"Then you did not see the Princess at all?" cried Emily, with a disappointed look.

* "Poems about Babies," vol. viii., p. 441.

I laughed derisively, pointed out the damaged state of my apparel, and threw myself back with a shrug of intense fatigue.

"By the way," I observed, presently, "whom do you think I saw battling like myself in the crowd?—whom but the cynic Haggatt. His hat was crushed, his shirt-front was disordered, his whole appearance was lamentable; but I distinctly heard him laying down the law to a companion. 'What did I say?' gasped the tyrant. 'Was I right or wrong? Why, O why did you tempt me hither? In low life and in high life a wedding is a nuisance to everybody but the chief parties concerned. 'Tis the beginning of a long term of sorrow. The minor actors feel miserable, the chief actors look ridiculous.'"

It is needless to say that Emily disdained to comment verbally on such language as this; but had Haggatt been present, her Medusa look would have petrified him to stone. For my own part, my sufferings during the day had almost converted me to Haggattism; but I was much too wise a man to avow the imminent heresy. By-and-bye, when my inner man was refreshed, and the cherub *simplex munditiis* was fast asleep, we again approached the topic of the day.

"After all," I observed, in my dictatorial mood—"after all, matrimony is, under any circumstances, a very solemn, serious affair; and this marriage is especially solemn, because not only the happiness of two individuals, but that of a whole people, is involved in the result. How much do we all owe to that union which was so bitterly rent asunder when Albert the Good breathed his last!"

"Not wholly rent asunder," observed Faith, with serious eyes, "if, as we all believe, there is something beyond the clouds of this tempestuous life of ours. But I was going to ask you, What have your friends the poets had to say on this subject of the marriage? Have you seen Mr. Tennyson's 'Welcome'?"

"I have seen the 'Welcome.' Like all the Laureate's recent productions, it is cautious, short, and timid. It is, however, to the point. Luckily, Mr. Tennyson has not attempted to write an epithalamium. The spirit of business enters nowadays into so poetical a ceremony as a bridal, and it would require a bold man to scatter upon the path of a newly-married couple such flowers as the old minstrels liberally plucked and distributed. *Tempora mutantur*, my dear. I should be sorry to think, however, that the marriage ceremony is unworthy to be sung about, or that those concerned in it do not develop a state of emotion poetical in a high degree. I won't ask you how you felt on a certain interesting occasion; I know you cried a good deal!"

Emily blushed, and requested me to abstain from personalities.

"Marriage, my dear Emily, is a sacred ceremony. I will not go so far as to say that all marriages are made in heaven; but I will boldly assert that marriage, theoretically speaking, is a noble ordination. The wedding day is the dawn of a new, a second being. The bridegroom

looks eagerly forward with a flushed, hopeful face; the bride, more timid, clings to the stronger arm, and looks backward on the peace she has resigned. Joy rises golden in the distance, but it sparkles upon tears. Bride and bridegroom stand hesitating on the brink of a path leading into tangled woods; but so far as the eye can see, the path is one of flowers. They tremble, they delay. To encourage them the glad bells ring out, the people shout, the path sparkles in the sun. "Come," whispers the bridegroom, and they step in. The sun shines, the birds sing, the flowers sprinkle perfumes. Onward wander bride and bridegroom, followed by friendly eyes, until they pass round a flowery curve, and are hidden from sight. The path seems to darken behind them; eyes strain in vain to catch a glimpse of them. What path have they turned into? Whither are they wandering? We can only conjecture. Perhaps they are lost among the mazes; perhaps they have stumbled into the pitfalls. Perhaps, on the other hand, they have found, far in the secret depths of the wood, a cherub sleeping silently. They have approached breathlessly, clinging to one another, and have peeped into the sleeper's face; and they have learned, to their joy, that, for their sakes, to bind them the more closely to one another, Jesus has once more made Himself into the image of a little child!"

Emily sighed.

"I am afraid," she said, "that your wedding picture is too high-coloured to hit the general truth. How many unhappy weddings do we see! how many marriages of convenience! There was Nelly Mansel, who, poor silly thing, married the middle-aged broker from Mincing Lane. She walked to the altar as pale as a lily; and when Tomlins put the ring on her finger, she looked into his eyes with a shudder!"

"Perish the picture!" I exclaimed. "Theirs was not a wedding, but a sale by auction. If marriage be not sacred, if it be not the union of pure minds, it is not marriage at all. It is a mockery, a bubble! Ideally speaking—and the ideal is the true measure of the divine plan,—there is no such empty falsehood as you describe. Marriage, to be marriage, must be pure, lofty, hopeful, noble. Even Mrs. Grundy takes this point of view; for she pretends, with her glitter, her parade, to believe that her ceremonies, however basely bargained for, are the beginning of a long career of happiness. Modern satirists have delighted to paint your picture in all the artist's elaborate colours; but satire, to say the best of it, is a very oblique development of the perceptive faculty. It perceives truth—pure truth, but lacks the power of idealizing it. The old poets, however, caught the right point of vantage. All their glorious tints, those elaborate compliments, those joyful ejaculations, are true to the ideal aspect of the bridal ceremony; and I hold that the ideal aspect is the only true one, simply because it is the *highest*,—the one which harmonizes best with God's conception. One of the noblest bridal poems in any language opens thus:—

‘Collis O Heliconei
Cultor, Uraniae genus,
Qui rapis teneram ad virum
Virginem, O Hymenae Hymen,
Hymen, O Hymenae!

‘Cinge tempora floribus
Suaveolentis amariçi.
Flammeum cape: lætus huc,
Huc veni, niveo gerens
Luteum pede soccum:

‘Excitusque hilari die,
Nuptialia concinens
Voce carmina tinnula,
Pelle humum pedibus, manu
Pineam quate tædam!’ *

“In an English *caput mortuum* :—

‘O thou, Urania’s heaven-born son,
Whose loved abode is Helicon,
Whose power bestows the virgin’s charms
To bless the youthful bridegroom’s arms,
O Hymen! friend to faithful pairs,
O Hymen! hear our fervent prayers!

‘Around thy brow the chaplet bind,
Of fragrant marjoram entwined;
And bring the veil with crimson dyed,
The refuge of the blushing bride.
Come, joyous, while thy feet of snow
With yellow sandals brightly glow.

‘Arouse thee on this happy day,
Carol the hymeneal lay,
Raise in the strain thy silver voice,
And in the festal dance rejoice;
And brandish high the blissful sign,
The guiding torch of flaming pine.’

“The above rendering, my dear, is by Mr. Lamb—the Honourable—not the Lamb who was so fond of roast pig. It is, as I have said, a *caput mortuum*; but as I have not yet invested in Mr. Theodore Martin’s ‘Catullus,’ I know no other. The nuptials of Manlius and Julia is a gem in a gorgeous setting, and would have well rewarded the labours of such excellent jewellers as Shelley or Leigh Hunt. The translation of Redi’s ‘Bacchus in Tuscany,’ by the latter, is one of the best things in our language. In this poem of ‘Catullus,’ the whole atmosphere is one of joy, the measure having a ring about it which places it far above all other Latin efforts of the same kind. The ‘Stella and Violantella’ of Statius

* Catullus, “In Nuptias Juliae et Manlii.”

has many fine qualities; and there is power in the epithalamium of Jason and Creusa, sung in Seneca's tragedy of 'Medea.' Neither of these efforts, however, surpasses another nuptial song by Catullus,—a chant of youths and maidens, on the occasion, some suppose, of the same marriage.—But there, I am tiring you, and will descend to poets with whom you are more familiar. What do you think of our Spenser's epithalamium on his own marriage?"

"It is so long since I read it," replied Emily, "that I hardly like to venture upon an opinion."

"Being tolerably familiar with my estimate of Spenser's rank among poets, you will not be surprised to hear me say that I think it one of the noblest compositions I have ever read. In melody and in luxuriance of appropriate imagery it surpasses even the 'Carmen' of Catullus. Nothing more specially beautiful has been penned on any given theme. Here, too, all is joyful, though the hymn opens in an address of graceful solemnity:—

'Ye learned Sisters! which have oftentimes
 Been to me aiding, others to adorn,
 Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rimes,
 That ev'n the greatest did not greatly scorn
 To hear their names sung in your simple layes,
 But joyed in their praise;
 Having all your heads with garlands crown'd,
 Help me mine own love's praises to resound,
 Ne let the fame of any be envide:
 So Orpheus did for his own bride;
 So I unto myself alone will sing,
 The words shall to me answer, and my echo ring'

"But the glad day has dawned, and the bridegroom bids the learned sisters, with all the nymphtry of land and sea, go to the bower of his 'beloved love,' and 'bid her awake, for Hymen is awake.' Immediately we hear in the music the gay gatherings of the nymphs, carrying fresh garlands, and the bachelors that wait on Hymen. The sun rises golden, and the glad tumult increases. Louder and louder the woods answer, and the echoes ring; the sunshine flashes, the birds sing. 'Awake,' cries the bridegroom, 'and hearken to the birds' love-learned song the dewy leaves among.' The bride wakes. Come now, ye damsels, and 'ye three handmaids of the Cyprian queen, help her to attire herself.' At last she is ready to come forth. The tumult grows louder and merrier; the pipe and tabor strike up; the damsels smite their timbrels, dancing the while; boys run up and down the street, crying, 'Hymen io Hymen!' Then follows a long and exquisitely beautiful description of the bride. The vein is one of wild hyperbole, but the occasion is hyperbolical. The lover, distracted with his joy, heaps flower upon flower, pearl upon pearl. So the glad procession

moves on to the altar. All is an odour of happiness. The roaring organs loudly play the praises of the Lord, and the hollow-throated choristers sing anthems. The very hands of the clergyman are blest !

‘Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesses her with his too happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks.’

The music seems to pause gently while the service proceeds. The eyes of the bride are fixed in modest sadness on the ground, till ‘all is done.’ Then the shouting and pealing ring out again, and the reckless bridegroom becomes prodigally liberal :—

—— ‘Bring home the bride again,
Bring home the triumph of our victory:
Bring home with you the glory of her gain,
With joyance bring her, and with jollity.
Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom Heaven would heap with bliss !
Make feast, therefore, now all this livelong day ;
This day for ever to me holy is ;
Pour out the wine without restraint or stay,
Pour not by cups, but by the belly-full.
Pour out to all that will,
And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
That they may sweat and drunken be withal :
Crown ye god Bacchus with a coronal,
And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine,
And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
For they can do it best ;
The whiles the maidens do their carols sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring !’

Bonfires are lit, the young men of the town ring the bells ; meanwhile the happy pair haste homeward, while the bright evening star comes out in the east. Then night comes down, and all is silence. Witches, hobgoblins, screech-owls, night-ravens, and damned ghosts disturb not the calm. Silence keeps night-watches, Peace in assurance reigns, and Sleep, ‘when it is time to sleep,’ pours out his dainty limbs. But the bridegroom looks forth from the dark chamber, and behold !—

‘Whose is the light that at my window peeps ?
Or whose is that fair face which shines so bright ?
Is it not Cynthia,—she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night ?’

Yes ; it is Cynthia, whose horn is full of fair promise. The poem ends with this noble invocation :—

'And ye, high heavens! the temple of the gods,
 In which a thousand torches, flaming bright,
 Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods,
 In dreadful darkness, lend desired light;
 And all ye powers which in the same remain,
 More than we men can feign,
 Pour out your blessing on us plenteously,
 And happy influence upon us rain,
 That we may raise a large posterity,
 Which from the earth, which they may long possess
 With lasting happiness,
 Up to your haughty palaces may mount,
 And for the gerdon of their glorious merit
 May heavenly tabernacles there inherit;
 Of blessed saints for to increase the count:
 So let us rest, sweet Love! in hope of this,
 And cease till then our timely joys to sing,
 The woods no more us answer, nor our ecche ring!'

"There! I think you will agree with me, my dear, that this song, made 'in lieu of ornaments' to bedeck a genuine bride, was a very splendid bridal present?"

"Very splendid indeed," observed Emily, with a sigh. "Perhaps a little too splendid. I have seen a great many weddings, but never such a one as Spenser describes. Perhaps they managed these matters differently when he lived?"

"They did; but the epithalamium would be just as appropriate if applied to the marriage of a modern Tennyson. In reading it, you must not for a moment lose sight of the fact that it is written from the point of view of the bridegroom himself. In that consists its poetical excellence. Spenser's 'Prothalamium,' or Spousal Verse, is also very fine."

"Shakspeare, I suppose, has attempted nothing of the sort?"

"No; nor could he, if he had done so, have excelled Spenser. I question, indeed, whether his union with Miss Hathaway threw him into the necessary delirium. But I will show you a composition very different of its kind, written by one of the younger generation of wits, the friend of Ben Jonson, Carew, and Davenant. It opens thus:—

'I tell thee, Dick, where I have been,
 Where I the rarest things have seen,
 Oh, things beyond compare!
 Such sights again cannot be found
 In any place on English ground,
 Be it at wake or fair.

'At Charing Cross, hard by the way,
 Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
 There is a house with stairs;
 And there did I see coming down
 Such folks as are not in our town,
 Vorty at least, in pairs.'

It is, you see, a countryman's description of a City wedding. The finery dazzles him; he is lost in admiration. First he describes the bridegroom, whose finical, effeminate air and fine clothes are rather contemptuously regarded by brawny Mr. Countryman. But the bride! passion o' me! a paragon:—

'Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on which they did bring,
It was too wide a peek:
And to say truth, for out it must,
It look'd like the great collar [just]
About our young colt's neck.

'Her feet beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice, stole in and out,
As if they fear'd the light:
But oh! she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter day
Is half so fine a sight.

'Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison
(Who sees them is undone);
But streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Catherine-pear,
The side that's next the sun.

'Her lips were red, and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly.
But (Dick) her eyes so guard her face,
I dare not more upon them gaze
Than on the sun in July.

'Her mouth so small when she does speak
Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
That they might passage get;
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
And are not spent a whit.

'If wishing should be any sin,
The parson himself had guilty been,
She look'd that day so purely!'

A charming little Miss, you will confess; but something else has to be described,—the wedding feast; a grand set out:—

'Just in the nick the cook knock'd thrice,
And all the waiters in a trice
His summons did obey.
Each serving-man, with dish in hand,
March'd boldly up, like our train'd band,
Presented, and away.

'When all the meat was on the table,
What man of knife or teeth was able
To stay to be entreated. . . .

'Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
Heaths first go round, and then the house;
The bride's fell fast and thick.
And when 'twas named another's health,
Perhaps he made it hers by stealth,—
And who could help it, Dick?'

Such is the famous 'Ballad on a Wedding' of Sir John Suckling, whom Winstanley calls 'the Delight of the Court, and the Darling of the Muses.' Sir John was a gay, gentlemanly fellow, cut off prematurely in his twenty-eighth year. It is to be regretted that, in his other poems, he sought the Court vein of poetry. His 'Session of the Poets,' however, though rather rugged as a whole, contains some admirable lines. His masterpiece is the 'Ballad.' It is infinitely better than his friend Ben Jonson's epithalamiums, one of which appears in *Underwoods*, the other is chanted in a masque on Lord Haddington's marriage. In both cases Ben wrote as an humble client, and his panegyrics, at the best, are stiff and formal. In the midst of his high-flown description of the bride he breaks out thus absurdly:—

'See how she paceth forth in virgin white,
Like what she is, *the daughter of a duke,*
And sister!'

which reminds one of Waller's famous couplet:—

'And thou, Dallhousy, the great god of war,
Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Mar!'

"Ben had seven children, but we know nothing about his wife, whom he did not take the trouble to celebrate as a divinity. In the days of the Apollo chamber in the 'Devil Tavern,' poets were beginning to grow mercenary in their praises of great people; and those who composed epithalamiums for titled people generally became stilted. Parson Herrick, however, was, perhaps, pretty sincere when he wrote his 'Epithalamie to Sir Robert Southwell and his Ladie,'*—a poem very unworthy of the writer of the 'Night Song to Julia.' Herrick was much too good-natured and jolly to feel at home upon stilts; besides, he was a bachelor. Like the merry Archdeacon Walter de Mapes,—

* The reader who takes the trouble to compare this epithalamium with the song, "In Nuptias Juliae et Manlii," will find that Herrick followed Catullus very closely,—even to the description of the *flammeum*, or flame-coloured veil, and the *noces*.

'Mysterious and prophetic truths,
He never could unfold 'em.
Without a flagon of good wine,
And a slice of cold ham !'

"Honest John Donne, immortalized by Izaak Walton, wrote several epithalamiums, which belong to the metaphysical, not the classical school. You, my dear, might make something out of them ; I am sure I cannot. Besides being very involved and laboured, they are full of coarse allusions ; and they all mention that ill-used bird, the phoenix. The best is the one beginning with an invocation to Bishop Valentine.—But I'm boring you."

"Oh no ; I always like to hear your opinions about poetry, and the —the subject—is interesting. But tell me, don't you think it a pity that Milton has not attempted anything of the sort ? The author of 'Comus' would have surpassed even your pet Spenser on such a theme. He would have been more *dignified*."

"Question, question ! Milton, my dear, was unhappy in his domestic relations, and——But what am I talking about ? Milton *has* written a bridal poem, nobler than that of Spenser, because the subject is nobler."

"Indeed ?"

"Ah, Emily ! Must I include you among those good people who talk of Milton, yet, in strict truth, know next to nothing of his grandest effort ?"

"The 'Paradise Lost' ?" murmured Emily ; "I am sure I have read it through two or three times."

"I have read it through twenty times, and hope to read it through twenty times more. I have learned more from it than from all the 'lofty brow flourishers, vainglory-osophers philosophers.' But what bridal was ever more divine than that of our first father and mother ? and what can be nobler than Milton's description thereof ? Do you remember ?—

'To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn : all heaven
And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selectest influence ; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;
Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle air
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp.'

"But I am wronging my original by quoting a single passage. Up till the entrance of the serpent, the description of Adam and Eve in the garden is a continued hymn of spousal. I cannot refrain, however, from repeating

the passage in which Adam describes his emotions in the society of his bride:—

‘Well I understand in the prime end
Of nature her th’ inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties which most excel;
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O’er other creatures; yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded. Wisdom, in discourse with her,
Rises discountenanced, and like Folly shows.
Authority and Reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed!’

You’ll grant that this is very beautiful?”

“Yes,” answered Emily,—rather doubtfully, however.

“You rather demur to Adam’s premises? You would be still less pleased with the answer of Raphael the archangel, who rebukes Adam for forgetting that, as the old song says, ‘man is the tap o’ the tree.’ Milton, you know, was an avowed believer in the inferiority of your sex; and I must say that he advocates his theory sometimes—as in the pamphlet on ‘Divorce’—with very considerable force. Ah, my dear, you live in the time when unmarried ladies write metaphysical poetry and pamphlets, and are actually permitted to print them! If you were a widow, now, you would set up a printing establishment!”

“I understand your vile allusion,” retorted Emily, with indignation; “but I bless the stars that women have begun to protect themselves, and are no longer wholly dependent on the caprice of wicked men. The—the—”

“Pray be calm,” I said, soothingly. “I was only joking; and ‘a plague upon’t,’ as Catullus has it, ‘that you will not permit me to be careless.’ Have you read ‘Hudibras’?”

“What has ‘Hudibras’ to do with the matter?” asked my better and smaller half, tartly.

“Well, not much. Only worthy Samuel Butler, the writer thereof, has written a little satire, which may amuse you, and which will serve as a nice contrast to the passages I have quoted from Milton. Here are a few tit-bits:—

'Sure marriages were never so well fitted
 As when to matrimony men were committed,
 Like thieves by justices; and to a wife
 Bound, like to good behaviour, during life !
 For then 'twas but a civil contract made
 Between two partners that set up a trade ;
 And if both fail'd, there was no conscience,
 Nor faith invaded, in the strictest sense.
 No canon of the church, nor vow, was broke
 When man did free their gall'd necks from the yoke ;
 But when they tried, like other horned beasts,
 Might have it taken off, and take their rests,
 Without being bound in duty to show cause,
 Or reckon with divine or human laws ! "

Patient as Emily was, she found this blasphemy unendurable. With kindling eye, quivering lip, she inveighed bitterly against the writer thereof. I rather repented having been wicked enough to make the quotation.

"It was only a joke," I suggested.

Emily's reply was to the effect that the subject was much too serious a one to be joked about; that to talk of sacred things in a flippant tone was to commit unpardonable sacrilege; and that I would be averring next—*horribile dictu*—that *Baby* was a joke. You see, Emily is a great admirer of Miss Martineau, and of other ladies who assert a masculine prerogative. At last she was calm; finally she laughed good-humouredly.

"In order to complete your good humour," I observed, "let me try and recollect any other really good epithalamium. No, I cannot—at least, no English one. Honest Mat Prior, to whom you have been introduced by the 'Nut-brown Mayde,' composed, when at college, a set of Latin verses, which are extraordinarily good, as emanating from a mere freshman. The subject was 'The Marriage of George, Prince of Denmark, and the Lady Anne.' As these verses would have applied admirably to the recent marriage of the Prince of Wales, I may quote to you a pretty literal rendering which I once made for my amusement:—

'Now, while the learned crew in lofty numbers
 Of Mars with Venus join'd in bridal slumbers,
 And Denmark wedded unto England, sing;
 In lieu of learned song I breathe a blessing,
 And weave a simple song, less wit possessing
 Than heartfelt love, an humble offering.

'Long may the happy couple cling together,
 Long may they live in pleasant sunny weather,
 Still cherish'd each by each in passion bright !
 Oh, bind them, Hymen, in the chain years break not !
 Keep them, O Juno, till they sleep to wake not !
 And, gentle Venus, guard them in the night !

'May children like themselves, in joy caressing them,
 Spring,—to give leaders to the world now blessing them !
 And when, grown old, they would together die,
 May death not even then asunder tear them,
 But such immortal angel hands upbear them
 As charioted Elijah to the sky !'*

"Altogether, on casting a bird's-eye view over my previous reading, I can call to mind no bridal poem written in that vein of genuine feeling which distinguishes the epithalamium of Spenser. It is ever so, Emily. To get our Hippocrene undefiled, it is necessary to go near to the fountain-head. I, at least, like Hazlitt, cannot write of modern poets with the same respect as I write of early poets, because I do not feel it. Poetry is the earliest born of society, and—unlike her younger sister, Science—she springs at once into blooming maturity. We can never have an epic nobler than the 'Iliad,' never have idylls better than those of Theocritus, never have lyric fragments sweeter than those of Sappho. In England here, it seems that possible perfection culminated in Milton. The realms of enchantment are for ever usurped by the 'Fairy Queen;' Shakespeare, the dramatist, towers pre-eminently over all possible successors; and in Milton, lyric harmony and epic power reach development as perfect as consists with human faculties of creation or conception. After Milton, who climbed to that mountain-top where he saw the archangels, the poets seem gradually to have been going down-hill. Even John Dryden, in spite of his mighty lines, was a comparative underling; and 'tuneful Alexis,' as Aaron Hill † calls Pope; compared to either of his great predecessors, was as an elegantly attired satyr to unclad Hyperion."

* The original appeared in the "Hymenæus Cantabrigiænsis" (Cambridge, 1683), and the name subscribed to it was printed, by mistake, A. Prior. Some lines are particularly good, and the whole may interest some readers, if quoted here :—

*"Conjunctum Veneri Martem, Danosque Britannis
 Dum canit altisonis docta caterva modis,
 Affero sincerum culto pro carmine votum,
 Quod minus ingenii, plus pietatis habet.
 Vivant Ambo diu, vivant felicitur, opto ;
 Diligat hic Sponsam, diligat illa Virum.
 Junctos perpetua teneas, Hymenææ, catenâ ;
 Junctos, Juno, diæ protege ; nocte, Venus !
 Exultent simili felices prole Parentes,
 Ut petat hinc multos natio bina duces !
 Cumque senes pariter cupiant valedicere terris,
 Nè mors augustum dividat atra jugum !
 Sed qualis raptum transvolat curris Eliæm,
 Transchat ad superas talis utrumque domos."*

It will be seen that my rendering is somewhat free, and misses the antithesis of "diæ" and "nocte" in the eighth line.

† "The Progress of Wit," a Caveat.

"They say," observed Emily, shily, "that only disappointed men rail against the times!"

"I am not railing against the times; far from it. I have reason to thank my stars that I live under a modern planet. I am simply stating a truth which most readers feel in their hearts, but which many of them do not care to avow. Who, that has read Milton, can tolerate Pollok or Tupper? Who, that is acquainted with Anacreon, can tolerate Longfellow or Mackay? No, my dear! Depend upon it, the light of the old luminaries can never be rivalled."

"You forget your favourite, Wordsworth?"

"So I do; and I forget Coleridge! Wordsworth and Coleridge made a grand effort to reach the old immortal stature; and the former, partly through the grandeur of his quiet life, succeeded.—But we are running away from the topic of conversation. I was commenting upon the solitary glory of Spenser's song. Now for a contrast! The last man in the world who ought to have said anything about marriage was the Dean of St. Patrick's. Jonathan, however, makes use of the theme for a dirty revel. In a poem called 'Strephon and Chloe'—which I hope no woman will ever read—he ridicules in the most wanton manner the very point of view which was taken by Spenser the bridegroom. There is some wisdom in what he says; but it is the wisdom of Diogenes, preaching amid the stench of his tub. I will find an extract or two, which will amuse you:—

*'Inprimis, at the temple porch
 Stood Hymen with a flaming torch;
 The smiling Cyprian goddess brings
 Her wanton doves with purple wings.
 The Muses next in order follow,
 Conducted by their squire, Apollo;
 Then Mercury, with silver tongue,
 And Hebe, goddess ever young.
 Behold, the bridegroom and his bride
 Walk hand in hand, and side by side;
 She by the tender Graces drest,
 And he by Mars in scarlet vest.
 The nymph was cover'd with her flammeum,
 And Phœbus sung th' epithalamium.
 And last, to make the matter sure,
 Dame Juno brought a priest demure.
 Luna was absent, on pretence;
 Her time was not till nine months hence.'*

"This, you will perceive, is very humorous mock-heroic. I repeat that what follows is not at all quotable; it should have been written in the language of the Yahoos. The wind-up, however, is judicious:—

*'A prudent builder should forecast
 How long the stuff is like to last;
 And carefully observe the ground,
 To build on some foundation sound.'*

What house, when its materials crumble,
 Must not inevitably tumble ?
 What edifice can long endure,
 Raised on a basis insecure ?
 Rash mortals, ere you take a wife,
 Contrive your pile to last for life,
 Since beauty scarce endures a day,
 And youth so swiftly flies away.
 Why will you make yourself a bubble,
 To build on sand with hay and stubble ?
 On sense and wit your passion found,
 By decency cemented round :
 Let prudence with good nature strive
 To keep esteem and love alive.
 Then come old age whene'er it will,
 Your friendship shall continue still ;
 And thus a gentle, mutual fire
 Shall never but with life expire.'

"Shades of Varina, Stella, and Vanessa ! Don't you think it a pity, Emily, that the Dean, instead of indulging in learned flirtation, and breaking at least two gentle hearts, did not proceed to carry out the above philosophy by marrying Miss Johnson ? Had he done so, much bitterness would have been spared ; and perhaps even that terrible last scene must have been softened by the light of gentle, unrebuking eyes."

Emily did not answer, but seemed plunged in reverie. A moment afterwards she betrayed herself by the very tiniest yawn ; and almost at the same time we hear a voice from the neighbouring chamber :

'Tis the voice of the cherub, we hear him complain ;
 There's a deuce of a noise till he slumbers again !

Yet that same cry, which broke up our conversation, might have sweetened the later days of the misanthrope Jonathan Swift !

R. W. BUCHANAN.

AUBREY MARSTON;
OR, A GAME OF SPECULATION.

CHAPTER XLIV.

WE TURN HOMEWARD.

"FROM your language at Hurstfield," said Sir Charles Wyndham, regarding me with a sorrowful and disappointed look, "I fancied you were disposed to indulge to excess your antipathy against the evils of speculation. I was even led to hope that some high aim of usefulness was possibly engrossing all those leisure moments which you abstracted from the friendship we proffered,—that you were occupied, it might be, with some harmless political fancy, or matured scheme of personal advancement. But this connection you have discovered with Sir Bedford Rushton; whose life and conduct seem to be of the most equivocal character, is without any redeeming consideration. The companion and the pursuit are alike unworthy and disreputable. Had you, indeed, in your inordinate passion for gain, retired into Yorkshire, turned your park into a hamlet, your lake into a millpond, and occupied your energies in contributing, like your neighbours around, to the wealth of the country, by the exercise of a steady, laborious industry, my pride would not have revolted; I should have been glad to have claimed you as a friend,—perhaps I should have refused you nothing in my power to grant. But the passion you have shown is not only grasping, but clandestine. You have committed yourself to one of those pursuits which men fear to practise in face of day. I can see no difference between it and the midnight gaming-table. Nay, there the dupes have at least the excuse of boon companionship, and sometimes the society of gentlemen; and if stimulated to folly and ruin, it is rarely done in cold blood. It is in this school, too, I fear, that you have acquired that habit of reticence and equivocation which has cost us all so dearly."

I did not attempt to reply. The conviction that his words were true cut me to the heart. If I attempted to avow my real motives, I should be answered, perhaps, with a sneer of distrust. Pride came to my aid with a sullen, obstinate feeling. The old consciousness of having pursued the best intentions smothered in my breast the disposition to make a last appeal to the indulgence of Sir Charles; and when we arrived in England, I almost fancied that these censures were only the preliminary to a direct intimation that our friendship was at an end.

But I was resolved that no hasty expression on my part should precipitate such a result. When I took my leave of Sir Charles, he received

me with few words, and dismissed me with an ominous formality. My feelings painfully struggled, as it were, between irritation and sadness. I was about to ask if anything had occurred to change his opinion of me, but could not muster courage for the effort. I was happily spared an interview with Adela, by reason of her attendance on the bereaved and still suffering Constance.

Instinct, and perhaps the sense of solitude, induced me to visit some of my old haunts. I could not bear the sight of the interminable line of walls in London; it was like pacing the narrow boundary of a prison, in view of guilty faces I feared and suspected. I felt the old fever return, and, rushing for relief into the country, found myself once more in Hampton Severn.

Here, too, everything seemed to have been transformed. It was the dead season of the year, and I no longer met the old familiar faces of my friends. The place looked not only deserted, but had the aspect of being put in mourning for its sins. The inhabitants seemed to crawl about by stealth through the silent streets; and that huge pile of stone and mortar, the Hampton Severn bank, rose blank and solitary above the roofs of the adjoining cottages, the doors and windows barricaded, and the walls defaced with a dozen printed placards indicating notices of sale.

I thought of the loss of Daisy's fortune in the luckless mines of Apularras, and determined that I should at least do what I could to cheer the spirits of the old man, and set out for Sommerleyton that night.

A year ago it was in my power to have compensated the error I had committed; but my resources were cut off just at the very moment of all others when I had most reason to covet their possession,—when I felt that I was bound in honour to make restitution.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE RUINED SQUIRE.

It was broad noonday when I arrived at Sommerleyton. The sun was streaming in rich golden light through the branches as I passed out of the high road up the old avenue of limes. An appearance of general carelessness and neglect struck my eye. Only one-half of the old iron gate now swung upon its hinges, and the way seemed to have been untrodden for months, as the grass grew up rankly out of the gravel underfoot. Yet everything denoted a spot where comfort and abundance had once reigned. Even now the mossy fruit-trees around were loaded with their rich store, and hung temptingly without a hand to gather them.

The farmyard was silent and deserted. The bright yellow stacks had all disappeared. One-half the doors stood ajar; and as I advanced, the

echoes of my footsteps sounded strange and ominous at a spot where, a hundred times before, I had been witness to a scene of busy and cheerful labour.

The only visible token of life was at the edge of the orchard, where the beehives of the careful Daisy had been arranged, now half enveloped in wild flowers and creeping plants; while the busy tribes, as it were by a singular instinct, were careering in the rays of the sun overhead in dense masses, as if preparing for flight. The sight before and around me was saddening, though a hundred happy memories rose up to chase away the reality. The laugh of the thoughtless Fairfax rang once more in my ear, as if he again pursued in his boyish way the frightened Daisy round the lawn, and claimed upon her rosy cheek the unresisting tribute of a kiss.

I almost feared to approach the door, lest I should be stunned by some distressing revelation of misfortune; and as the knocker fell with a dull, hollow sound through the hall, it was evident that the place was no longer tenanted as of old, when half a dozen dogs sprang up with a loud chorus at the approach of a visitor. An elderly, sad-looking woman, attired in black, whom I recognized as a farm servant, cautiously opened the door, and gazed upon me with the heavy, sodden eyes of one who has suffered from long watching. At her heels slunk an old, blear-eyed staghound, a favourite of Silverthorne's, who generally followed him about the stables; and now in token of old acquaintance pushed his cold nose into my hand, and gave a low note as I inquired of the servant whether her master could be seen.

"Nay. Squire ben't so well to-day, nor fit to see nobody but young missus. Mayhap he will speak with thee. Wilt come forward?"

As I passed into the hall, and gave my name to the woman, she observed, in a dejected way,—

"Miss Daisy bears up wonderful; but she can't stand it long. Watching and loneliness will wear out the poor thing. We are all sadly put out here," said the attendant, in an apologetic tone, as she motioned me into an adjoining apartment.

In a short interval the well-remembered step of Daisy came fluttering along the hall, the door opened cautiously, and the next moment the artless girl, with a childlike simplicity, threw herself sobbing upon my shoulder.

"Oh, this is so kind of you not to forget us," murmured Daisy, as with a blush she took a seat beside me, apparently ashamed of the excess of the impulses which had carried her away;—"so kind. Father will be overjoyed to see that his old friends have not all forsaken him,—and you most of any," continued she, drying her eyes. "You know the fearful history of his losses. The neighbours and the Earl would have stood by him to the last; but father was proud and high, and would take nothing. So the old estate has gone, one portion after another, and the house now

alone remains over our heads. Oh! this suspense is terrible; it is killing him, for I fear father can never part with Sommerleyton."

"But it seems to me," said I, "that there has been serious mismanagement of his affairs. His solicitor should have consulted his interest so as to have protected him."

"No, no. Father would insist on paying to the last farthing; and when the lawyers proposed to stay proceedings to gain time, he became furious, and we were forced to let him have his own way."

"But this is mere wanton self-sacrifice, while there are other contributors who should be called on to bear their just proportion of the burden."

"Then you must come and speak with father about all these matters. He will listen to anything from you," said Daisy, leading the way along the passage through a postern door into the orchard, where, in an arbour at the further end, sat Silverthorne, shrunken in limb, his figure no longer erect, but leaning forward on his staff, and bent double as if with the weight of years. His features had become painfully sharp and angular during the interval, and his sunken eye glared with a keen, feverish look of alarm from beneath his bushy eyebrows.

"Who comes this way now?" exclaimed he, looking up with a frown, in hurried, half-angry accents. "Go your ways—go your ways; I will not part with the old house. I mean to live out my days and die here; I have said so; so go your ways," he repeated, waving me off with the back of his hand. A second look sufficed to convince Silverthorne that he had made a mistake, and hurriedly rising from his seat he wrung my hand with a stiff, bony gripe, which proved that, however bowed down by trials, there was still some vitality in the fingers of the old man. "Bless my soul! This is a surprise indeed. We have but a poor welcome for our guests now at Sommerleyton.—Did I not say that Mr. Marston would not forget his old friends, girl?" cried he, appealing to Daisy, who stood looking on, between smiles and tears. "No; we can no longer say, 'Welcome to Sommerleyton,'" said Silverthorne, faltering. "But why do I open the old wound, as if I had nothing else to talk of,—a foolish, mad act, which has set me beside myself? But I will pay to the last farthing, except—except—" continued he, casting a glance around the orchard. "No; Sommerleyton must go too; I will pay my debts—I mean other people's debts," said Silverthorne, with a calm resolution, after drawing a long breath, and casting an affectionate eye on his daughter.

I begged him to dismiss for a moment these distressing matters, and endeavoured to direct his attention to some of his old favourite topics; but Silverthorne shook his head, seemed to take no interest in past pleasures, and continued to repeat with obstinate persistence his firm determination to pay to the last farthing.

Seeing that such was the bent of his conversation, I tried to obtain full particulars of the exact position of his liabilities, the amount of liquidation still outstanding, and the name of his solicitor; and resolved, on

my return to Hampton Severn, to do all in my power to stay the consequences of this honourable recklessness on the part of Silverthorne, and, if possible, preserve him from the hardship of being thrust forth by the requirements of the law from the dwelling of his fathers.

Daisy and the old servant made an effort at hospitality, and pressed me, as of old, to rest a night at Sommerleyton; but it seemed to be more by way of formality than with the hope that I should comply, and so discover the nakedness of the land. How painfully I felt at that moment my own powerlessness to make an offer of my resources, and rescue a worthy man from a sort of self-immolation!

On my return from Sommerleyton I reflected over the undisguised coldness of Sir Charles Wyndham at my last leave-taking; the formal excuse he offered for the absence of his daughter, when I dropped some natural allusion to Miss Wyndham; his utter silence as to my paying any visit to Hurstfield; and, above all, the timid reserve which had marked the conduct of Adela on our homeward voyage. "Could it be possible," I asked myself, "that some unjust suspicions were harboured against me; and that the Wyndhams set me down as a dangerous or incautious man, who spent his time freely in the society of any adventurer whom chance threw in his way?" The death of Fairfax left me without a friend to appeal to for counsel or explanation. To him I owed my introduction and friendship, and with him, perchance, was now to end that intercourse which, up to a certain period, had offered so fair a prospect of happy consummation.

My doubts on this head were not long in being solved. On my return to Hampton Severn a communication from Sir Charles awaited me. I paused ere I broke the seal, with a trembling consciousness that the letter contained matter which might make or mar my destiny in life. Perchance it might be some explanation by way of afterthought on the part of Sir Charles as to the abruptness of our leave-taking after so lengthened a sojourn together on the Continent, or an invitation to Hurstfield, or a few words regarding the progress of Constance since her return to England.

The brevity of Sir Charles's communication startled me as I glanced over the contents, and read as follows:—

"SIR,—After a full and calm review of the peculiar embarrassment in which, by your own confession, you have been placed, and your equivocal connection with two individuals who seem to have had so singular a hold on your friendship and attachment, even whilst ostensibly prosecuting your suit with my daughter, I must be permitted to say that I could not for a moment allow you to pursue this matter further. I beg, therefore, you will consider your intercourse with my family as at an end. A sense of discretion and gentleman-like conduct must suggest this course to you as the only one which can possibly be satisfactory to my feelings. The pain I suffer in making this communication, after a lengthened friendship, is somewhat mitigated by the consciousness that I am only performing a duty, and probably relieving you from the necessity of offering any further explanations.

"Sir, your obedient servant,

"CHARLES WYNDHAM."

I was thunderstruck at the peremptory tone assumed by Sir Charles. Not a word of sympathy with my unlucky position, after my frank and full confession; not a syllable of indulgence expressed for all the efforts I had made to put the best interpretation on the errors of the unfortunate Fairfax, so as to screen him from Sir Charles's censure. But, rather a coarse and unworthy insinuation that I had been keeping up a secret *liaison* with Louise de Montfort, all the while I had been admitted to friendship with the Wyndhams. His suspicion almost implied that he doubted my veracity; and with a sense of angry pride and wounded feelings I forgot all discretion, hastily snatched up a pen, and wrote a curt note in reply. With an affected hauteur of language, and a slight sneer at the fears of Sir Charles regarding my position, I trusted that neither he nor others would be sufferers from our past intimacy; and that with reference to the closing sentence of his letter, I begged to assure him that he had only in reality forestalled me in a step which delicacy and self-respect must have counselled me to take.

I passed a night of feverish anxiety, and woke the next morning with the confused and fearful consciousness that, in an unguarded moment, I had written something very like my own death-warrant.

CHAPTER XLVI.

SIR BEDFORD FULFILLS HIS DESTINY.

BRIGHTON was again at large, and in England. What I heard of his coolness and self-possession astonished me as much as any incident of his previous career. He no longer frequented, it is true, his old familiar walks in the City, and De Maintenon was shut up, and with its effects was advertised for sale in an ostentatious announcement occupying half a column of the *Times*; but he had still the effrontery to display his sturdy person in such conspicuous and fashionable places as Brighton, to dress with more than usual care, and, in short, to affect the bearing and habits of an idle man of pleasure. When he chanced to meet with a sufferer, he shook hands sympathizingly with him, repeated the oft-told tale, protested that his motives were honourable and disinterested, that he was a serious loser himself by a panic which ought never to have occurred in a sound state of society. Latterly, however, he had been more disposed to retire from public observation, and to live secluded at his sumptuous villa on the south coast, to the erection of which he had formerly devoted his leisure hours.

Sir Bedford had made repeated efforts by letter, as well as by personal communication through mutual friends, to bring about a reconciliation with myself. He entreated a last word; professed to have something of the greatest importance to communicate, if I would only grant an interview; trusted that I still held the shares of the Apulxarra Mining Com-

pany, and the Argentine bonds, at which allusion my feeling of rage generally became so overpowering, that I read no further, and threw the letter into the fire. Hardly a week passed without a despatch from Sir Bedford, concluding in the same strain of friendly and confidential advice, and sometimes alluding to the interest I had once expressed regarding Mademoiselle de Montfort. His tone of familiarity, however, gradually began to change to sadness. He spoke more diffidently, if not indeed somewhat despondingly; and from some of the allusions he dropped, I was led to believe that Sir Bedford had at last begun to feel the consciousness of approaching that terrible abyss of poverty which he had ever urged me to avoid.

The opinion of the general mercantile body was infinitely more indulgent than my own. Rushton was not only upheld as a man of prodigious capacity and unequalled nerve, but a man against whom no individual durst openly express the most guarded insinuation of dishonourable dealing. He was looked upon now as one whose plans had failed through one of those unaccountable accidents to which all human affairs are liable. His universal talent, indeed, was the common daily talk on 'Change. Nay, his reputation had even been bruited abroad over the Continent; and although essentially a man whose career belonged to the things of the past, and whose sceptre had been broken, curiosity was still busy with his name, and Sir Bedford had earned, by general consent, the flattering epithet of *THE NAPOLEON OF SPECULATORS*.

This, however, seemed to be, after all, the only fruit of those restless and adventurous efforts which had absorbed all the active years of Rushton's laborious life. He was destined, in all probability, to go down to the grave without honour and without friends; to subsist in economy upon the remnant of his once enormous fortune, and to feel the constant necessity of keeping up a fictitious show of wealth, lest rivals, whom he hated, should rejoice in discovering the nakedness of the land. How he could bear such a reverse I became really interested to know; and while I was musing with myself over the various guesses and errors of judgment regarding his character, which men who had enjoyed a less familiar intimacy than myself were falling into, a short paragraph in the evening newspaper met my eye, announcing the astounding intelligence that Sir Bedford had been drowned while bathing off Brighton!

"Drowned! Impossible!" I exclaimed. "Rushton, the strongest swimmer in England!"

Three days previously I had, in a momentary fit of impatience, broken through my rule of silence, and despatched a note in reply to one of his customary urgent requests, assuring him that his advice in the opinion of all men was now utterly worthless, that a personal interview I should never grant, and that his communications would be treated with contempt. Since the despatch of that curt reply, a letter, in Sir Bedford's hand, evidently containing a long correspondence, had just been received, and

lay unopened before me; and I was pondering within myself whether, by returning it with a courteous affectation of form, I might not work the desired end much more effectually than by indulging in angry language, when a similar paragraph, in a morning journal, caught my sight, headed,—

“Distressing occurrence.—Sudden death of Sir Bedford Rushton.”

With eager interest and somewhat dazzled vision my eye ran rapidly over the column in the newspaper, and I read as follows:—

“**WORTHING, 14th July.**—A most distressing accident has just taken place on our coast, fortunately so exempt from casualties of like nature. The body of a gentleman, said to be resident not far from Brighton, was washed ashore last night, having evidently drifted some miles down channel by the current, which flows with unusual rapidity between Brighton and Worthing during the ebb tide at this season. Report, which can be accurately relied upon, affirms that the unfortunate deceased, who was a splendid swimmer, had, at an unusually early hour on the previous morning, purchased a dozen tickets of one of the bathing men at Brighton, to whom he was well known on the beach. After remarking to the man, in a jocular way, that he was bound for Dieppe, he despatched him with a message for a Spanish newspaper, which the servant would give him on inquiring at a certain place; then stripped, and swam resolutely out seaward. The bathing man is ready to affirm on oath that he waited on the beach for some time, and in the interval saw the unfortunate gentleman continue to strike out ahead, as if he were really bent on executing his purpose; and that just as he proposed to a comrade to launch a boat and go in pursuit, the swimmer, who had proceeded half a mile, suddenly threw up his hands and disappeared beneath the waves. The event has caused the utmost consternation on our coast; and if report speaks truly, the deceased was well known in the City of London, and has died possessed of an enormous fortune, which will, it is said, devolve upon the Crown, as he has no heirs.

“**FURTHER PARTICULARS.**—All doubts are now at rest. Sir Bedford Rushton is no more. The body has this morning been recognized by a servant, from a small gold ornament containing a lock of dark hair, greatly prized by his master, which he always wore concealed round his neck. The unfortunate Sir Bedford, it will be remembered, was a noted swimmer, having frequently contended, in his younger days, with Lord Byron in crossing the Hellespont. Being a man of powerful frame, and apparently in excellent health, it is a matter of surprise that he should have sunk so suddenly, and, what is more singular still, that he should have made no effort to regain the shore. In all probability he was overcome by an attack of paralysis or cramp.”

* * * * *

I let fall the paper from my grasp, and cast my eyes instinctively upon the thick unopened packet lying on the table, in Sir Bedford's handwriting. It was carefully sealed with a large impression, and for the first time I observed that black sealing-wax had been used for the purpose. Sir Bedford always avoided what was sombre, and favoured the most delicate colours. It was an ominous sign, and I conjectured that the enclosure must contain something which would tend to confirm or falsify the truth of the report copied from the local newspaper which I had just read.

I felt the secret consciousness, as I broke the seal, that I was about to read a confession. My hand was on the autograph of one whom I knew too well; whose principles of action, although perverted, were always consistent and intelligible, and who, perhaps, was now prepared boldly to justify his last act, and to proclaim that self-destruction was the sole resource of a man forsaken by his friends, and driven to desperation by fortune, in whom he had put his trust alone.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE LAST WORD.

"THIS is the last communication with which you shall be troubled from me. Your altered attitude towards myself during the last six months, however painful, can easily be overlooked by one who, in his conflict with the world, has learnt that species of indifference which springs from a large and somewhat sad experience of men and things. The peculiar weakness and suspicion of your character afford a clue to your conduct, as forming, perhaps, your natural excuse for a want of gratitude. Allow me to assure you that you have been subsisting under a host of delusions from the first hour of our acquaintance. It was not my pleasure to enlighten you regarding them; and if I do so now, it is rather to satisfy your curiosity, and justify my own conduct, than with the hope that either you or I can derive any advantage from the confession. In your case, Marston, if I may except one wish, disinterestedness has been my only motive from the first moment. I found you a recluse, poring over a few dull books, shunning the society of your equals, scoffing at club life, and almost in danger of becoming a misanthrope. I sought to drag you from this state of wearisome existence, to make you a man of action, to give you the inducements of a probable pecuniary gain, and the enjoyment of a pleasurable occupation. To a certain extent I succeeded. You acknowledged that I was right—that you were wrong; and expressed yourself more than once grateful for the services I had so liberally rendered. So long as things went well—so long as you found your store increasing—I received your homage, and you were entirely in my power;—I could have persuaded you, perhaps, to anything. But as soon as the reverse took place, with the usual ingratitude of the baser sort, you forsake your best friend, and fly at me in terms of reproach and accusation,—as if I were a swindler without character and antecedents, and a hypocrite to boot. Can you bring any charge home? Nay, can you find a single peg on which to hang your shallow suspicions? Trace the history of our connection from the first day, and tell me where I have been false—where I have given dishonest or even interested advice.

"I say your judgment has been hasty, and you have condemned a

well-wisher. When I took you in hand, I fancied I discovered some sparks of a capacity which might have been turned to more useful account in the world. You were docile, and willing to be instructed; but I candidly admit I had to contend with a host of early prejudices, the effects of education and constitutional bias. If I only partially succeeded in weaning you from these, it was because our friendship was of short duration; fortune turned against us, and your confidence in me was shaken by your fears—those imaginary fears against which I shall never cease to inveigh. But why should I blame you now? You may grow wise with years.

“I have suffered bereavements like yourself, and one which is far more severe than anything you can now experience. You have lost, in the prime of life, a volatile, reckless, inconsiderate, vain companion; and I have lost, in all her wasted beauty, a child,—lost her through the rashness and cruelty of Fairfax. Yes; the Louise de Montfort whom you were pleased to speak in praise of, and bestow some of your hours of dalliance upon, was MY CHILD. In deference to the narrow prejudices of English society, I allowed my daughter to bear an assumed name—that of an old and valued friend; and concealed from the censorious world the intimate relationship she bore to myself. This will, perhaps, surprise you, as you are aware that I have never been married—at least, in the formal and legal sense of the word. Yet it is even so. Louise is my natural daughter; but as proud and gallant blood as any in England runs in her veins. You talk of family, of heraldry; your ideas are weak and silly on the subject of your Norman descent; but let me tell you the child of Donna Ramires de Lucena has no need of a formal heraldry to proclaim her lineage. It is written in the history of the chivalry of Spain,—in a thousand transactions of which, possibly, you have never heard, and if you heard now you would, perhaps, distrust.

“I will not endeavour to guess how far I should have succeeded in my wishes, if all my calculations had not been blighted by the follies of your friend. So artfully and insidiously had he woven his net round my daughter—so intense was her attachment and devotion to that worthless man—that I struggled in vain to break the spell which estranged her affections even from myself. Had Arthur Fairfax even been eligible in any respect, I saw that the hand of death was upon him,—that he was wearing out his strength and constitution in worthless pursuits; and that if I permitted this attachment to continue, the heart of poor Louise must be broken. My efforts came too late. I succeeded in abstracting her for a time from his society. I threatened—perhaps I even persecuted—one whom I loved, in my eagerness to divert her thoughts from Fairfax; but in vain. Remember that it was for your sake that I subjected her to this tyranny. I hoped to warp her affections; but she wasted and pined away in secret for the society of him to whom I discovered that she had yielded up her heart. My consent was forced from me by the wish to preserve the life of my daughter. Then came the realization of my first suspicion.

I knew the volatile character of your friend, and conjectured truly that he would prove a trifier when the novelty of his attachment was past. You know the sequel. Why should I allude to the history of his connection with the Wyndhams, and my own fond weakness to gratify the last wishes of Louise by seeking you out abroad, and falsifying, by a personal interview in the presence of Fairfax, the foul suspicions which, in a moment of ungovernable passion, you cast upon her reputation?

"You will ask, were there no further motives for my friendship and attachment to your interests? I was flattered by the admiration you confessed for my daughter. I must admit I meant to lay you under a load of obligation; to make you feel acutely the services I had rendered, and to exact my price for them. If this motive were selfish, it was only natural and laudable on my part; and perhaps you would not have been degraded had the consummation been more propitious. Your exaggerated social prejudices, however, put me on my guard, and precluded me from declaring frankly the exact relation in which I stood to Mademoiselle de Montfort. It was my design, at the opportune moment, to have revealed the history of her birth, and to have brought your feelings of gratitude to the test. I pursued that object in seeking to build up your prosperity as if it were my own, and remember that you were flattered by the choice.

"With me will die the secret of your liabilities. My latest thought has been to deliver you from the possibility of your being one day overwhelmed, or the world any the wiser. As you have accused me of being the cause of your ruin, so I have freely taken the burden upon myself, and destroyed all the evidences and documents by which you might be implicated through my fall. Had Gareb Rimmon not failed me in the hour of need, I should now hear nothing but words of laudation from my detractors.

"It is my intention to retire from the world, to contemplate at a distance the efforts of the more fortunate around me, and to philosophize on the instability of fortune and the weakness of mankind. You are young, and have had the advantage of an early though sharp experience. Persevere in the counsel I have given. Hold firmly under all circumstances by the Argentine bonds and Apulxarras Mining Company. The time will come, and perhaps sooner than you anticipate, when you will recognize the value of my long experience, and confess that if I have failed in realizing for myself, at the close of a busy and adventurous career, that dream of material success which I only worshipped in common with the men of this age, it is not from any defect in the principles I have upheld, but from calculating too sanguinely upon being supported in my efforts by the willing obedience, the steadfast resolution, and the unflinching fearlessness of others. Farewell."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A MIRACLE ON 'CHANGE.

WHEN it was known in the City that Sir Bedford Rushton had in reality died poor, a strong feeling of sympathy sprung up in a thousand quarters in his favour. Men regretted that one possessed of talents and resources so undoubted should have been cut off in the very strength of his intellect; and prophesied that, had he been allowed one chance more, he would not only have recovered his losses, but, in all probability, have founded a family, and amassed one of the largest fortunes in England. The poverty in which he had died brought him, in short, more sympathy than all the show of wealth he had so ostentatiously lavished during his career of prosperity. It looked like honesty and disinterestedness, and men respected it accordingly. It turned out that De Maintenon was mortgaged for its full value; and the marine villa at Brighton, with its quaint furniture, choice pictures, and articles of *vertu*, had been for some time in the hands of the Jews. Yet Sir Bedford owed no man anything. His minor household debts were all rigidly discharged as they accrued; and if he left no effects to be divided, he left no heirs to question his judgment, or to deplore his want of foresight in their favour.

I was now able to judge clearly of Rushton's real character. The veil was withdrawn which had so long hidden his secret motives from me; the circumstances were explained which gave me natural cause for indulging in suspicions that proved groundless. His vein of sarcasm sprung from a feeling of disappointed ambition, and perhaps from the consciousness of his having early fallen into a social error which the world would not pardon. In short, he felt himself excluded by circumstances from those circles which his talents, his acquired fortune, and his aspirations suggested as his natural sphere of action. The career of unlimited speculation into which he had plunged seemed to be dictated less by a sordid love of gain than the desire to lord it over his fellows, to surprise the mercantile world by his ingenuity and address, and, by leaving his fame bruited abroad, to live in the opinions of an age which passes by the plodding and unostentatious in favour of the man who can realize rapid and astounding results.

A month rolled over. The world ceased to interest itself with Sir Bedford's past performances, and became engrossed with the efforts of some new favourite. I had long shunned all converse with the men whose acquaintance I had made under the auspices of my ill-fated mentor. Some lingering curiosity, however, as well as a foreboding that my perils were not yet over, led me into the City. I endeavoured to forget that I had still a risk; but the chain had been too elaborately wound round me to shake it off at will. Without the companionship of Rushton, the place looked in my eyes as though its presiding genius had departed. The

effects of the late crisis, too, were hardly yet over. Men, if I might judge by their countenances, were still timid and distrustful, and brushed by each other with hesitating and curious looks. As I wandered among some of those once familiar purlieus, reading the history of disaster and crippled resources in the faces of men who had formerly worn a buoyant and elated mien, and wondering whether any of my old colleagues of the Board of Apulkarras were still left to moralize on their misfortunes, I found my progress barred by a gentleman, wrapped about the throat with a thick tartan muffler, who cordially held out his hand in token of old acquaintance. A glance at his features, and the intonation of a deep, solemn voice, reminded me of some guest whom I had met at Sir Bedford's table.

"Ye dinna ken yer auld freend, I trow," said Mr. M'Phun, removing the plaid from his face, and drawing forth his snuff-box and presenting it to me. "It's aye the way of the world, I fear, when ill luck happens. But hae ye heard the news?"

"In the City?"

"Ay. Sir Bedford's turned out a wonderful prophet, after all."

"Oh, I have ceased to take all part or interest in the news here."

"A wonderful man," continued Mr. M'Phun, helping himself to a long pinch of snuff. "We don't foresee anything for ourselves in this world. Aye just a day behind the tryst. I made a sair bummle in not taking his advice anent the Argentine bonds. They tell me that news of a prodigious discovery arrived this morning. But I am sick of all this," added Mr. M'Phun, holding up his hands by way of protest,—“vera sick. I hae lost half my siller in the mines of Apulkarras. Hech, sir! that's learning wisdom with a vengeance.”

"And I am heartily sick of it, too," said I, sympathizingly.

"Well, ye hae got your experience early, and it should be a lesson to ye as lang as ye live. Avoid the temptation of these unholy gains. Even if we got all we strive for, should we be as contented with our lot as the simple cotter on the brae side? Na, na. Believe me, real happiness is not to be found here in your grand cities, nor in the contentions and wrastlings and foolish graspings of mankind."

I was not long in learning the purport of the important news to which Mr. M'Phun had alluded. I suddenly found myself surrounded by a knot of eager talkers, and the subject of congratulation on all sides. Men whose faces I never saw before shook my hand, and stared in surprise at the apathy I exhibited. In the buzz of conversation I caught the words, "A wonderful result! An astounding realization! Who could have expected it? A miracle, in fact!"

"Yes, nothing short of a miracle. And what a proud man Sir Rashton would have been to-day, had he been alive!"

"Pray, can you inform me what is the news?—what is this miracle?" I demanded of a bystander whom I recognized.

"You are a lucky man, sir, and don't know your good fortune. Are

you not the principal holder of the Argentine bonds, lately considered as so much waste paper?"

"Well, and what of that?"

"Why, sir, the discovery of the guano islands. Men are mad this morning after Argentine stock."

I waited for no further revelations, but bent my steps forthwith to my old friend Mr. Jeremy, of Thavies' Inn. He was as ignorant as myself of the sudden turn of fortune which had taken place in my favour; told a long history of the uses to which the Marston Estate had been converted; and, after proceeding to the City, returned in breathless haste to announce that I had been reinstated by an unforeseen accident in a position of affluence.

With the exception of the pleasure I experienced at the thought of relieving Silverthorne from his embarrassment, the news fell dead upon me. I had grown indifferent to all the excitement of gain or loss. I found myself bereft of friends, oppressed with a load of sad memories, and saw my motives unjustly suspected in those quarters where I vainly hoped to have reaped respect. Everything in England suggested an ever-increasing feeling of gloom and solitude. The skies seemed to lower more heavily; old familiar objects which met my eye only awakened reminiscences of a painful nature, that I wished to forget. I had no ties to bind me to home—I had indeed no home; and my resolution was taken to leave England for ever.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

COULD I think of making myself a voluntary exile without an interview with Sir Charles Wyndham—some further attempt to justify my past conduct, and, if I could not succeed in again acquiring his good opinion, at least to clear myself from those unjust imputations which his letter conveyed? Why should I now, on leaving England, allow my character to lie under a false light through a sense of exaggerated and perhaps mistaken pride? My feelings had indeed been wounded by a slight; but it was folly to treat as an irrevocable act that which might possibly have resulted from a mere misconception on his part.

I resolved, therefore, to take a more humble course, to forego some of my former feelings, and wait on Sir Charles at Hurstfield. Two months, indeed, had brought about a calmer and better state of mind. The important changes and events which had occurred in so short a time served also to divert my own egotistical complaints, and to lead me to the conviction that some events were beyond the control of the ablest, and that if I had suffered disappointments, I was only one out of many whose destiny it was to be tried and chastened by an unseen hand in a conflict with adverse and inevitable circumstances.

I proceeded into Kent, feeling that these would, probably be the last of the youthful days I was destined to spend in England. It was evening when I came within view of the familiar plantations of Hurstfield, my intention being to put up at the small inn in the adjoining village for the night. As I approached my destination the solemn tolling of a bell struck my ear. It was the knell for some departed spirit, at peace with itself and the world. Borne on the stillness of evening through the broad glades of oak, it came with a wailing sound of mourning. The next moment a long, dark procession passed round the base of the hill, and slowly disappeared. White waving plumes! My frame thrilled with emotion at the sight. For whom could that impressive apparel of death be designed? Let it pass. Why should I take an interest in a spectacle which at that moment might be enacted under the same circumstances in a hundred other places in England? Yet my heart seemed to whisper that I had lost a friend. I felt a strange instinct to hasten my steps and follow the hearse as a mourner, but the train seemed to have passed away as silently as a vision!

My landlord received me with an embarrassing silence and gravity. He, too, was a mourner, and all his household.

"You have arrived rather late, sir," said he, in a low voice, as he conducted me to a small room I had occupied on a former visit. "Miss Constance's funeral took place at four this afternoon,—an old custom of the family. The Wyndhams always bury after sundown."

It was impossible to intrude at that moment upon the sorrows of a bereaved family. Yet for two whole days I hesitated to tear myself away from the spot; and when at last I had resolved to take my way back in solitude to London, and was just preparing to depart, I was accosted by one of the servants of Sir Charles, who had accompanied us to Italy,—the same man who found me, half distracted, stumbling over the ruins on the memorable evening of Fairfax's death. He communicated to me in a whisper that Sir Charles, hearing of my arrival in the country last night, requested that I would do him the favour to repair to Hurstfield with all haste; that he had most important communications which I should hear from his own lips, as he was too weak and agitated to write.

A new hope seemed to break in upon me; my heart beat quick as I passed once more up the winding avenue of old oaks, along the path where the leaves of autumn were now swept by the low, moaning wind; and with nervous steps followed the attendant into the library, where Sir Charles, pale and thin, was waiting to receive me. As I entered, he rose from the chair on which he was seated, and silently extended his hand.

"This is kind—this is generous. You come to comfort an almost childless old man. I have been hasty and imprudent in my judgment. We have judged you unjustly. Can you forgive?"

I was taken completely by surprise at this sudden burst of reconciliation, and struggled in vain for words.

"Yes, we have indeed misjudged you. But your strange intimacy with Mademoiselle de Montfort; your association with that reckless and unfortunate man, Sir Bedford Rushton, the end of whose career I have just learnt; your hesitating language towards myself on the subject of your pursuits; your indecision and absence of mind at Hampton Severn, at Hurstfield, in Italy,—all served to excite our suspicions that you were playing a false and equivocal part, and only trifling with the feelings of my daughter."

"Oh, Sir Charles—"

"Say no more, Aubrey. Your effort was a generous one. You sought to screen the follies of your friend. You perilled your own happiness, and almost lost an inestimable treasure. Yes; the evidence of your innocence is here," said he, holding in his hand a packet of letters, "and the explanation shall be a short one. Listen to what I have to say, and then let us both forget it for ever."

As he spoke, he placed the packet before me, and at a glance I recognized the familiar writing of Louise de Montfort, as well as that of another female hand.

"When the correspondence of Constance with Fairfax was restored to us by his uncle," said Sir Charles, in a calm though tremulous voice, "we found the handwriting of that lady who has been the subject of so many surmises on our part. One truth was at once revealed,—I saw the relation in which those two unhappy beings stood towards each other, and I desired to know no more. Can you forgive?"

"Forgive!" I echoed. "Oh, you are too kind, Sir Charles. It is I who have been precipitate, and you who have to pardon."

"Then make your excuses in that quarter where your faults are likely to be as indulgently regarded," he said, with a kind smile, as he led the way towards a side door that led out of the library. "Remember you are here to-day a mourner equally with ourselves. We cannot treat you as a stranger."

As Sir Charles threw open the door, a tall figure, attired in the deepest mourning, rose gracefully from her seat at the further end of the room. A sweet sadness was on the half-averted countenance of Adela Wyndham, and a tear, like a bright liquid star, dimmed her eye. But sorrow had stolen nothing from her former beauty. It was still the same placid countenance which haunted me in my early dreams—calm, hopeful, and resigned;—a spirit above this world!

The most solemn moment of my life had at last arrived. Adela extended her hand. Her head slightly drooped as my glance met hers. My doubts were past! I sprang forward at the beckoning of Sir Charles, and was reconciled.

THE SPOOR

BY CAPTAIN A. W. DRAYSON, R.A.

THE terms "Spooring" and "Trailing" are used to indicate the art of following the traces of any animal, or to discover what creatures may have lately passed over the ground on which the spoorer is himself walking.

This art—for it really deserves the name—is practised chiefly by sportsmen and savages, whilst it is one also that the detective ought to be well acquainted with. The readers of some modern sensation novels have been favoured with several items which belong almost exclusively to the art of trailing; whilst also some modern sciences have become so, simply in consequence of facts brought to light by "spoor" of various descriptions.

To the average or unskilled observer, the discoveries of the accomplished trailer will seem quite wonderful,—little short of the strange results said to occur in connection with clairvoyance. These facts, however, are really merely the result of observations of a most careful nature, and reasoning based thereon; and the results which are then obtained are simple enough.

The American Edgar Poe wrote several very interesting tales, in which the art of sporing occupied a very prominent part;—the murders in the Rue Morgue, for example, where a tuft of hair indicated that a species of baboon had been the culprit instead of a man. The "Gold Beetle," again, by the same author, is a very ingenious piece of trailing, with the exception that the angle of elevation at which the telescope was to be held to obtain a view of the skull would have revealed the sky, but nothing more. These and other similar tales, however, belong more to the detective branch of the subject, whilst it is our object to write a few pages on the more sportsman-like branch.

In order to be able to read spoor, we must first become acquainted with the style of footprint of various animals, and here there is at once a very wide field for study. It may certainly be simple enough to tell the difference between the footprints of a man, a horse, a dog, a cow, or a pig; but in order to be an adept at spoor, we should be able to state positively, even when a naked footprint is seen, whether it be that of a man or woman, whether the person was walking slowly or quickly, whether he or she was tired or fresh. We can also decide whether the person was lame, and in some instances we might know *who* the person was whose footprints we had seen; also we might state when the person had moved over the ground on which we had observed his traces.

Let us now inquire by what means these facts would become known.

The principal difference between the footprint of a man and that of a woman is that the latter is longer in proportion to its breadth; the stride is usually shorter; and if the foot is naked, the toes are less spread. If a person is walking quickly, there will be an indication towards the toe of

an extra pressure being there exerted. This is merely the result of the spring in walking, and any person who walks quickly will find that he does press the ground more with the front part of his feet than when walking at an average pace. When a person is very tired, he usually drags his feet along as though they were very heavy; the elasticity of the walk is lost, consequently the impression of the fore part of the foot would not be more clearly marked than that of the heel. Also the person sways about slightly, so that he does not maintain a regular line; the impressions also left by the feet vary considerably, because there is an irregularity in the action. A lame person can easily be recognized by his spoor, for one who is not "sound" takes a shorter pace with the lame leg, therefore a short and a long pace would naturally indicate a lame person.

Almost every individual has some peculiarity, either in the shape of the feet or in the manner of walking: some turn out the toes more than others, or tread more on one side of the foot than the other, or walk more on the heels; and any one of these peculiarities, combined with those previously mentioned, will often aid us to individualize a footprint. We have a friend whose spoor we have followed for a mile on the sands of the seashore; and we have been certain it was his, simply from the fact of his turning out one foot more than the other, this peculiarity having been caused by an accident.

It is of course almost impossible to apply the art of spooring to macadamized roads, paved streets, or crowded thoroughfares: it is adapted to the country; and the less populous the district, the more likely is it to yield us certain information.

The time that has elapsed since a footprint has been made, is a subject that must be very carefully studied, and it is a considerable time before a person becomes an adept in this branch of spooring. It is necessary to observe whether the sun has shone freely on the traces, whether the dew could have fallen on them, whether they were entirely or partially sheltered from the wind. We should also know when rain fell in the locality, and we should also observe the nature of the soil. We have seen semi-savages who, having studied a footprint during several minutes, would positively assert that it had been made on the morning of the day before yesterday. And this was no mere guess, for upon bringing another savage to examine the same footmark, he would give the same answer, although unacquainted with the opinions previously expressed; and these statements we have so frequently been able to test, that at length we became convinced that spooring, when cultivated in this way, was almost like another sense added to those which we already possessed.

The sportsman who travels into distant lands, and measures his powers and skill against various wild beasts, finds that a knowledge of spooring is absolutely necessary. When travelling in a country which possesses no marked features, or in a bush, cut up by paths like Rosamond's bower, it is often necessary to follow one's own traces, in order to

get out of a bush, into which we may have ventured. The fair Rosamond would not long have remained concealed from the eyes of a good spoorer, for her traces would easily have been followed by him in spite of the intricacies of her retreat.

To be able to recognize the spoor of any animal is the result of experience: there are minute details which enable us to decide upon the species of animal when we observe its footprint; for example, the spoor of a hyena is very similar to that of a dog, with the exception that the inner toe of the first is much smaller than is the exterior, whilst the dog's exterior toes are matched in size. The spoor of the leopard is not unlike that of the dog, except that the ball of the foot is rather larger; and none of the feline tribe, except they be badly wounded, ever show the print of a claw; whilst with the dog tribes the nails can always be seen when the ground is soft, and the impression of the footmark consequently distinct.

In the vicinity of an English forest the spoorer's skill may often be tested, if he has to decide when he sees pigs' and when deers' spoor; the two are not dissimilar, except that the fore feet of the deer are more pointed than are those of the pig, whilst there is a greater difference in the shape of the fore and hind feet of the same animal, a buck's hind feet being very much larger and more spread than are his fore feet.

We may very frequently become aware that there are animals of a particular description in most unlikely places, if we merely observe or are accustomed to observe spoor. Not many years ago we found the footprint of a rabbit on a small piece of common land which was in daily use as a parade and cricket-ground, and was surrounded with houses. A few furze bushes were scattered about on it, and under the cover of one of these the rabbit had made a hole, and probably only ventured out by night.

During a residence in Africa, on the outskirts of civilization, we found one morning, within a hundred yards of our tent, the footprints of a hippopotamus. He had evidently purposed travelling across about a mile of ground, in order to reach the sea-shore, but had smelt our presence, and had retraced his steps. The spoor of a hippopotamus is usually only found on the borders of rivers and lakes, so that this creature was a great traveller, as he was fully a mile from any water—a fact not likely to be discovered, had we not seen the spoor.

In order to discover the rate at which an animal travelled, it is necessary to know the style of action adopted. There are very many animals that move in a similar way, such as horses and their kin, dogs, and others. These creatures walk, trot, and gallop. In walking, a horse brings his hind feet to the ground nearly on the same spot that his fore feet previously occupied; according to the stride of the horse, so he will bring the hind foot slightly before or behind the point of the fore foot. Some horses we have seen overstride in this manner some seven or eight inches, whilst others never bring the hind foot before the spot previously occupied by the fore. Thus it is possible to recognize a friend's horse by its footprints.

The spoor of a trotting horse is very similar to that of the same animal when walking ; but there will be found a difference in the deepness of the impression, and also in the toe of the animal's shoe being more distinctly marked when his pace is the more rapid.

When cantering or galloping, the horse leaves four distinct footmarks at equal intervals, a longer interval, and then four more, and so on : according as the horse possesses a long or short stride, so will the space covered by the four footmarks be long or short. When a horse has what we may call a springing gallop, or canter, the interval between each series of footprints is much longer than the average.

In a wild country, where there are not very many horses with shoes on, it would be quite possible to recognize the particular footprints or action of a horse. The readers of "The Last of the Mohicans" may remember that Uncas knew the daughters of Munro were before him, because the spoor showed him that the horse they rode lifted the legs on the same side at the same time, an action very rare amongst horses in that district. We have ourselves been a witness to an almost similar case, where a Hottentot traced one of our lost horses simply by means of its peculiar action, its spoor having been frequently crossed by that of other horses.

The effect produced upon spoor by heavy dew, rain, or wind, varies considerably according to the soil. On sand a shower of rain will almost obliterate a footprint, whilst on stiff clay it will merely cause an appearance of age. The effect of dew is less than is that of rain, but both *age* the spoor very much. In very hot climates there is usually a large amount of dew each night ; this generally falls shortly after the sun has set, but this is not always a rule. The regular tracker, however, soon becomes accustomed to judge whether the dew fell early or late during the night, and upon this he is enabled to decide at almost what hour an animal whose footprints are seen was on the spot where his traces are being examined.

On one occasion we were accompanied to the edge of a dense forest by a Kaffir sportsman, whose skill as a spoorer we had frequently tested. We were in search of a solitary bull elephant, and we soon came upon his traces. We followed these for some yards, when we passed under a tree, the long branches of which were scarcely ten feet from the ground. Our dark companion here examined the spoor with great care, and after a close inspection informed us that the animal had been there just after sunrise. It being to us a matter of almost as great interest to discover how this fact could be known, as to find the elephant himself, we, by a series of questions and answers, heard the reasoning adopted by the Kaffir, and the cause of the conclusions to which he had arrived.

He told us that, as we had before seen, the footprints of the elephant were above all the dew, no dew had fallen on his footprints in the open ; so that it was evident the creature had not walked there either in the evening or in the early part of the night : so far he had ascertained from the examination in the open country, but the tree had told him all the rest.

He then pointed out where the sun had risen, and showed that the branches on one side of the tree might be quite dried by the sun, whilst those on the other side would be still wet in consequence of their remaining in the shade. But such a relative condition would not exist long after the sun had risen, as the air soon dries up the damp on the leaves. He then pointed to two branches, one on each side of the tree, and showed that both had been rubbed against by the elephant in its passage. On the sunny side of the tree no drops had fallen on the creature's footsteps, but on the shady side a whole charge of little drops had pitted the greater number of the large plate-like impressions made by the animal in its passage. The elephant had evidently shaken the branch, and thus showered down the yet unabsorbed moisture. On one spot, exactly under the lowest part of a branch, we, however, observed no drop marks on the footprints, and slightly further on the footprints covered the drop marks. Upon pointing this out to the Kaffir, he immediately explained it by showing that the drops must, in the first locality, have fallen on the elephant's back, but in the second instance he had walked over them after he had pushed the branch by his passage. It was only those drops which fell behind him which could be visible on his footmarks.

Previous to this experience we had, when only imperfectly acquainted with the Kaffirs' character and language, been frequently puzzled to discover why such earnest and lengthy discussions would frequently occur amongst our spoorers, before they agreed or gave an opinion as to the period at which some animal had been over the ground on which we had observed his spoor. We were unaware that "spoor" was to be worked out like a problem, to decide which correctly, required very much more reasoning and careful thought, than many other matters which at first might appear more difficult.

On another occasion we were puzzled by a curious anomaly in spoor, and two out of three Kaffirs were also unable to account for the mystery. In this, as in the former instance, the spoor occurred on rather soft, dry, dusty soil, that had been worn smooth by the frequent passage of elephants, and was well adapted for spooring and noting all minute details. Our problem was this:—

Four elephants had been drinking at a pool of water, and had then entered the bush. There was only one pathway, and all four elephants had apparently entered by this one path. Yet upon a close examination we found that for the first fifty yards there was only the spoor of one elephant, the footprints of the others being invisible. The ground was dusty, and several dead leaves were lying about, and the one spoor was very visible, but no other footprints could be seen. How, then, could this be explained? We soon found that one of our Kaffirs had a theory, —and we therefore asked him for it,—which was, that the last elephant had broken off a large branch, to the end of which was attached a mass of creepers; that he had carried this in his trunk, and the ends had dragged

on the ground, and thus swept out the footprints of the three elephants that had preceded him. He pointed to a number of lines in the dust, as a proof that something had been dragged along the ground. But his opinion was proved to be true when we advanced some sixty yards, for there we found the branch lying in the path, and beyond it was the distinct spoor of four elephants.

It takes a considerable time before a person is qualified to give an opinion as to the number of days that have elapsed since an impression of a foot was made; no conclusion can be accurately arrived at unless we know whether there has been any rain, much wind, sunshine, or shade during the interval. In sheltered situations we have seen a footprint a week old, look as new as one whose origin might have occurred within twenty-four hours. This is especially the case in rather damp clay, for the impression there remains for many days without losing any of its minute details.

Although to the untrained eye a spoor can be more readily seen and followed on open ground, than on grass or amongst bushes, yet the practised trailer will desire to find grass, shrubs, or bushes which have been crushed or broken by the animal in its progress. These serve as admirable aids in ascertaining dates, for all broken plants take a certain time to wither, the sap to dry, and the fractures to become brown and old-looking; and the denizen of the woods is well acquainted with the peculiar vitality or sensitiveness of each description of plant, and judges thereby of the length of time that has elapsed since it was broken or trodden under foot.

Short grass that has been trodden upon by such a massive foot as that of an elephant will continue to spring up at intervals for several minutes: branches also that have been bent back will not immediately recover their original position, but a slight gust of wind will often enable them to do so, and a rustling and sudden jerk of the branch of a small tree is a hint which the spoorer should not lose sight of.

More than once have we found a knowledge of spooring of great use in finding our bivouac, and we have thus been enabled to sleep on a dry bed beneath a tent, instead of passing the night in a torrent of rain out in the open country. In one instance we carried on a spoor during the early part of a pitch dark night, and as our experience may be of use to other travellers, we will here give it.

Having with a companion ridden some distance from the road pursued by our waggons, we were led away by a chase after a hartbeest, and soon found the shades of evening closing over us. We sillily endeavoured to make a short cut in order to regain the road, but found our route intercepted by Krantzes and a river; it was therefore necessary to diverge considerably, and we were at length obliged to steer a course by the stars alone. By this proceeding we avoided the not uncommon error of riding in a circle. We knew that somewhere before us were three roads, but which of the three had been pursued by our waggons we did not know;

and to add to our perplexity, the night was very dark, the stars alone giving any light.

At length we reached a road, but was this the right one? was a serious question. Now the party to which we belonged had two waggons, several horses, and some dogs, and we therefore resorted to spooring to decide whether we were on their traces.

A cigar light enabled us to ignite a bundle of dry grass, and this gave us sufficient light to see the road, upon which were no fresh traces of either waggons, horses, or dogs. Two or three miles further on, however, another road was crossed, and our illumination showed us clearly the traces of our waggons, horses, dogs, and also the footprints of some of our friends. We had then simply to follow this beaten track in order to reach our encampment.

In the wild regions of Africa such an expedient was common enough, but it would probably strike the resident of civilized England as at least singular if he were obliged to find his way home by means of examining the road by the aid of a wisp of blazing grass.

Spiders' webs are excellent aids when spooring in the bush. Spiders usually make a fresh web every twenty-four hours, especially also they will recommence a fresh web if their old one has been broken down by any accident—such as the passage of an animal through it. If, however, a web be stretched across a pathway, we may be tolerably certain that no animal has passed in that direction during the last four or five hours. It is, however, believed by Mahometans that when Mahomet concealed himself in Mount Shur, a spider's web immediately covered the mouth of the cave, and thus prevented his pursuers from seeking for him therein.

Those persons who have never thought about spooring, and who consequently, even in rural districts in England, disregard or overlook the various spoor written on the soil, are not aware how much that is interesting is lost to them. There are always creatures of some kind that are very shy, or whose habits are nocturnal, and are consequently rarely seen, but they cannot avoid leaving a spoor, and thus indicating to the trailer many of their most secret habits and peculiarities; and thus we may first obtain a clue to a creature's secret retreats, and at length discover him, merely from having seen his spoor. It is by this means that even in most unlikely places in England we have seen badgers, wild cats, foxes, snakes, hedge-hogs, &c., simply from having found where they were in the habit of taking a walk; and thus as we passed over a country we probably saw more of its wild inhabitants than the average observer. In a foreign land, however, where man has to maintain by force and skill his supremacy over the brute creation, and sometimes even the no less savage native, a knowledge of spoor is essential. As an example of this, and in conclusion, we will give an account of an adventure which a Dutch boer experienced, and from whose lips we heard the account.

It was during one of the many Kaffir wars that have so often devastated

portions of the colony of the Cape, that the boer was riding from his own farm to that of a friend distant some twenty miles. As he cantered along the road he carefully examined the surrounding bush, hills, and country, and also the ground over which he was travelling. When within two hundred yards of a drift or river crossing, he observed the print of three naked men's feet on the road, and these indicated that those who had made the marks had entered the bush and gone towards the drift, a favourite place for an ambuscade, as the horse can only cross the river at a foot-pace, and thus affords a very good chance to an indifferent marksman. The boer also saw that, from the direction in which the men had come, they must have lately passed over a ridge from which he, as he approached, must have been visible. "Kaffir robbers and ambuscade!" was thus plainly written to the boer, who immediately turned his horse and rode back, intending to ride rapidly to another drift, and try to cross the stream at a less dangerous place.

No sooner, however, did he wheel his horse about, and commence his retreat, than the Kaffirs, who were concealed near the stream, found that their spoor had been discovered and recognized. They gave their usual defiant yell,—"*Ou ya goka!*"—and fired two or three long shots at the retreating horseman, who escaped unhurt, and was soon beyond the range of the Kaffirs' muskets.

The apparently trifling fact of having observed the print of naked feet on the ground undoubtedly saved the boer's life.

ANNABEL'S DREAM.

I KNOW that many, if not most sensible people, so called, laugh to scorn the bare notion of attaching any importance to dreams. I confess I do not. I believe that many persons are nowadays, as Joseph was of old, warned of God in a dream. Apart from all credulity and superstition, totally distinct from rappings, mediums, and other phenomena of the same class, whereby the unwary are deluded, and others diverted or disgusted, as the case may be, stand many well-authenticated instances of dreams, which have more than once led to the discovery of some long-concealed crime, and the detection of the criminal.

Many of my readers will remember the case mentioned in the newspapers not many months ago, with names and dates given, of the man who committed, or was supposed to have committed, suicide. He suddenly disappeared, and all search for him proved unavailing until a well on the premises was examined, in consequence of his sister having dreamed that she saw a man standing beside it with his hat on, the night her brother was first missed; and there the body was found. A singular coincidence, to say the least of it.

The story I am about to relate is equally singular, and undeniably true. It was told me by my friend the incumbent of Claystone, to whom the scene of it and the actors in it were both well known. He was a college chum of mine; and though when we left Oxford and went our several ways in the world—he to his first cure, and I to my chambers in the Temple—our personal intercourse was necessarily interrupted, our friendship has continued undiminished to this day; and whenever I can take a holiday, I am sure of a cordial welcome at Olaystone Parsonage.

One evening during my last visit we were sauntering up and down under the limes which bordered the drive on either side, smoking, and talking over old times, when, just as we neared the gate, which commanded a good sweep of the road, an old-fashioned yellow fly came in sight. Old-fashioned is a mild form of expression; to me there was something ghostly about it. It might have been the identical coach in which Miss Havisham, Estella, and Pip sat, and waved flags out of the windows (I believe that was a black velvet one, by the way), according to that voracious hero's account of his first interview with the forlorn lady. This ponderous yellow vehicle gave one the idea of having lain—covered with cobwebs without, mouldy and moth-eaten within—in the neglected coach-house of some deserted inn for generations.

"Where upon earth does that venerable specimen of antiquity come from?" I exclaimed, involuntarily, as the yellow fly approached us at a pace that would have driven any ordinarily energetic traveller to distraction.

"The 'White Hart,' at Playford," was my friend's reply.

"Well, the place does look as if it had been asleep for the last hundred

years, but I should have given it credit for being able to turn out something a little more modern than that in the nineteenth century. Fancy any one in their sober senses crawling along in such a machine, when one can do the distance by rail in ten minutes! Who may that benighted individual be?"

"Our friend of the Hill House."

"Not Mrs. Cunliffe?"

"The same."

"She would have got back sooner if she had waited for the next train."

"Trains make no difference to her. She never travels by rail if she can help it."

"My dear fellow, you don't surely expect me to believe that her creeping along in that rickety old vehicle is a matter of choice?"

"It is a fact, nevertheless. She always employs it for her journeys to and from Playford; I don't suppose she would think herself safe in any other."

"What an unaccountable whim!" I remarked.

"No, hardly that," replied Merton; "at least, to those who know the cause of her apparent timidity. There are some curious circumstances connected with it."

"What may they be?"

"Come and sit in the porch, and you shall hear."

I obeyed; and when we were comfortably settled on the bench in the comfortable porch before the parsonage door, my friend told me the following story.

"It must have been about eight years ago," he said, "that I first became acquainted with Mrs. Cunliffe. I was returning from Slough, whither I had run down about a curacy in the neighbourhood, for which I was in treaty, and the only occupant of the carriage beside myself was a gentlemanly man, between thirty and forty, I should say. We fell into conversation, and when we reached Paddington left the station together, and stood talking outside for a few minutes; then, hailing a cab, he jumped in, and was rapidly driven off. He was no sooner gone than I stumbled over something; and, picking it up, found it was a pocket-book, which must, I felt convinced, belong to him; no one else having been near enough to drop it just there.

"I had no clue to my fellow-traveller,—did not even know his name,—and the pocket-book was bulky. I opened it, and found notes and gold to a large amount, but no address; only the name of 'Roger Cunliffe' attached to one or two memorandums. So there was nothing for it but either to advertise it myself, or wait till some one else did. I chose the latter course; and, as I expected, it figured in the second column of the *Times* next morning; and I lost no time in restoring it to the owner, who proved to be my travelling companion of the day before. This led to our further acquaintance. I dined with him *en garçon* that evening (his wife was at their

country house, and he in town on business), and as we shook hands when I came away, he gave me a cordial invitation to Claystone.

"It was some months before I could avail myself of it, however, for my rector's health obliged him to go abroad for a time, and consequently all the work of the parish devolved upon me. Very hard work it was, too; and when, towards the close of the summer, Mr. Cunliffe wrote to me, renewing his invitation in very pressing terms, I gladly accepted it, for I really needed a holiday.

"Accordingly I went, and met with a warm welcome from himself and his wife. She was a simple-minded, warm-hearted creature, with whom I felt at home at once,—always bright and cheerful, and devoted to her husband; indeed, she scarcely seemed happy when he was out of her sight. I spent a few weeks there very pleasantly, and on leaving promised to pay them another visit at the earliest opportunity.

"Many months after, I was greatly surprised to receive a letter from my new friend, offering me the incumbency of Claystone, to which, it appears, he had the alternate presentation; and urging my acceptance of it. Of course I did accept it; and as the parsonage needed some repairs and alterations, and my engagement in Berkshire would terminate nearly a month before they could be completed, the Cunliffes begged me to make their house my home until my own was ready for me. This I was nothing loth to do, after my pleasing experience of a former visit; so I took them at their word, packed up my traps (I was a bachelor in those days), and went. I found them the kindest friends. They introduced me to my parishioners and neighbours, entered warmly into all my plans for church, school, clubs, and the like, and Mrs. Cunliffe herself superintended the 'setting to rights' at the parsonage. At last the preparations were nearly concluded, and I was to leave them in a day or two.

"One morning, when we met at breakfast as usual, I saw instantly that they were both very much discomposed. Mr. Cunliffe appeared vexed, and inclined to be irritable; while his wife was pale and silent, and her hand shook so that she could hardly pour out the tea. Once or twice, when I spoke to her, she scarcely seemed to hear, and made no answer for a moment; then, with a start, she apologized for being so absent. 'You must think me very rude, Mr. Merton,' she said at last, 'but indeed I cannot help it. I have had a bad night, and that always upsets me and makes me nervous;' and she shivered as she spoke, as if the mere thought of it disturbed her.

"'Merton,' said Mr. Cunliffe, looking up from his letters, 'you'll go to Playford with us this morning? We shall start about eleven.'

"'Thank you,' I was beginning, when Mrs. Cunliffe exclaimed, hastily,—

"'Oh, Roger, you won't go to-day? Don't!—pray don't!'

"'Nonsense, my dear!' he answered, hastily.—'Merton, you'll go?'

"'If you would only give it up for to-day!' persisted his wife, in

tones of agonized entreaty, which, I confess, seemed to me at the time totally inexplicable. 'Do be persuaded by me.'

"My dear Annabel," he said, gravely, 'this is absolute folly. I *must* go to-day. Why not, as well as any other day? You can do as you like about it. You really should not allow such a foolish thing to upset you so.' And gathering up his papers, he left the room.

"He had scarcely done so when, to my utter astonishment, the lady burst into a passionate fit of weeping. I did not know what to do or say, and, thinking she would be better alone, was making towards the door; but, checking her tears, she sobbed out, 'Don't go away, Mr. Merton.'

"As I still hesitated, with my hand on the door, she got up, rapidly closed it, and laying her hand on my arm, continued, 'Oh, Mr. Merton, for pity's sake, don't let my husband go to Playford this morning! Use all your influence with him. Persuade him to stay at home; or prevent his going in some way or other.'

"My dear lady," I said, 'I will do all I can, as you so earnestly desire it; but indeed I have no influence with him; and if I had, what argument could I use? You would surely be more likely to succeed than I.'

"I do earnestly desire it!" she cried, vehemently, repeating my words. 'I have begged and prayed him to give it up, but it is of no use—none. He *will* not listen to me.' She waited, wringing her hands, and pacing up and down the room in her intense agitation.

"Do you believe in dreams?" she began again, after a moment's silence. 'I had a dream last night,—such a dream!' and she shuddered at the bare recollection of it. 'I thought that we were driving in the phaeton along the road to Playford, my husband and I; and just as we came to the bend in the road beyond the entrance to Barfield Wood, the horses shied at a heap of stones by the roadside, and he was thrown out and killed. I saw it all as plainly as I see you now. I saw him lying there in the road by that heap of stones, dead—DEAD!' she repeated, in a harsh whisper, with dilated eyes, and every vestige of colour gone from her face.

"I tried to soothe her by suggesting that it was only a dream,—that she was nervous,—but it was useless; she went on as if she had not heard me.

"I awoke, trembling in every limb, and my cry of horror woke Roger. He tried to calm me, and after a while I fell asleep again. I dreamed it a second time, and started up in affright. Hoping to dispel the impression, I got up and walked about for some time; but it was of no use. I went to sleep once more, only to dream the same thing over again. And I know it is a warning. Roger only laughs, and says I am foolish and nervous; but I *feel* it will come true!' and her sobs broke out afresh.

"Her fears must have infected me, for I felt far from comfortable myself. However, I went to Mr. Cunliffe, whom I found walking up and

down the terrace in front of the house, smoking, and I endeavoured to alter his intention, but without success.

"‘Ah, I see Bel has been talking to you,’ he said, between the puffs of his cigar. ‘The idea of your listening to such nonsense, and you a parson!’

"‘But Mrs. Cunliffe’s dream seems to have made such a painful impression upon her,’ I urged, ‘that if you really could put off this journey—’

"‘My dear Merton, I really can’t. I *must* go to-day, as I told her; so there’s an end of it.’

"At eleven o’clock the carriage came round; and as I was wondering whether Mrs. Cunliffe would venture to accompany her husband, she appeared on the doorstep ready dressed for the drive.

"‘That’s right, Bel,’ said Cunliffe, as I helped her into the phaeton: ‘Merton will follow us on horseback.’

"She only looked her thanks; I saw she could not trust herself to speak. I had to wait for the horse, so that it was nearly a quarter of an hour later before I set off; but I pushed on, thinking I should soon overtake them.

"The village, as you know, is about a mile and a quarter from the high road, and I had to walk the horse over the worst bits in the lane—a rough road at the best of times,—which rather delayed me. I was making the best of it, and thinking over the events of the morning, when, at the last turn in the lane, about a hundred yards on this side of the turnpike gate, who should I come upon but Mrs. Cunliffe, walking.

"‘You are surprised to see me here, Mr. Merton,’ she said; ‘but my head aches so violently, and I feel altogether so ill, that I really could not go on; so I turned back, as you see.’

"I immediately volunteered returning with her, but she would not hear of it. ‘You’ll soon overtake the carriage,’ she remarked; so with a parting bow I rode on.

"Just as I passed through the gate, Dr. Price’s groom came up at a hand-gallop, his face as white as a sheet.

"‘Mr. Cunliffe?’ I asked, with a sudden presentiment of evil, before the man could speak.

"‘Yes, sir,’ he answered, mechanically touching his hat.

"‘Not killed?’

"‘I’m afraid so, sir. Master’s with him now, and he sent me on for you.’

"I waited for no more, but put spurs to my horse, and quickly reached the scene of the accident. The catastrophe was precisely that which Mrs. Cunliffe had seen in her dream. It must have taken place at the exact spot she had specified,—the very bend of the road, with the heap of stones at the side, that she had described; and on the pathway on the other side lay Mr. Cunliffe, to all appearance dead.

"Dr. Price was bending over him, and some men were bringing up

the gate of a neighbouring field, which they had taken off its hinges, and of which, with the cushions and rugs from the carriage, we made a rude kind of litter.

"'Not dead, I hope?' I said, as, with the doctor's help, we moved him carefully, and laid him on it.

"'Not quite, but nearly as bad. He'll never recover it.'

"'Concussion of the brain?'

"'Yes. He may rally; but if he does, it will be only for a time. A month at most will end it.'

"'Who is to tell that poor thing?' I asked, involuntarily. 'It will break her heart.'

"'You must,' said Dr. Price, decisively. 'There is no time to be lost,' he continued; 'go on and break it to her. We shall follow you slowly.'

"I turned back with a heavy heart. Accustomed as I was to scenes of suffering and sorrow, I shrunk from the task; I fairly dreaded it. But it must be done, and that speedily; so, with a prayer for them both on my lips, I rode on.

"You know the situation of the house. Well, when I reached the first gate, I caught the flutter of a light dress between the trees that bordered the drive, and I knew it was Mrs. Cunliffe, watching. I called the man who was clipping the hedge, and, telling him in a few words what had happened, sent him round to the stables with the horse, and walked on towards her.

"'You are come to tell me,' she said, when I got near enough to speak. 'You need not; I know it all. I knew it would be so. I must go and make ready for him;' and she walked steadily into the house, followed by the dog.

"I was fairly astounded. Remembering the scene of the morning, and her uncontrollable agitation, I had almost feared to think of the effect the sad tidings I bore might have upon her; and here she was, calm and collected, giving her orders with wonderful forethought and precision, and seeing them executed herself then and there.

"Presently she came out, saying all was ready, and, taking her stand beside me, resumed her watch, with her hands tightly clasped, and a face like marble: the dog was still at her side. She never asked a single question, never uttered a sound, until the mournful procession came in sight. Just as they appeared at the outer gate, Rollo set up a prolonged howl. The sound seemed to rouse her; for suddenly grasping my arm, and looking into my eyes, she gasped out, 'Dead?'

"'No!' It was all I could say.

"'Thank God!' and she neither moved nor spoke again until the bearers paused at the door with their unconscious burden. Then she stepped forward, drew aside the handkerchief which concealed the features, kissed the poor white face, and led the way into the house and into the

room, which neither persuasion nor entreaty could induce her afterwards to leave.

"When Dr. Price came out, he gave me the particulars of the accident, which in every respect tallied exactly with the account of it given that morning by Mrs. Cunliffe as it occurred in her dream. He had them from a traveller who was passing at the time, and who immediately drove on to Playford to fetch him. This gentleman was about twenty yards behind the carriage, he told the doctor, when the horses suddenly shied at the heap of stones, and overturned the phaeton, flinging Mr. Cunliffe out on his head. He instantly called to some men who were at work in a field near, and left them with the sufferer while he went off for assistance."

"A very, very remarkable coincidence, certainly," said I, as Marton took a pull at his cigar. "I suppose the poor fellow died, then?"

"Yes," he answered. "He rallied, as Dr. Price had foretold, and after about a fortnight was able to be wheeled into his study for an hour or two every day; but he harped continually upon going out of doors."

"He should never get well," he said, "unless he could get into the fresh air again." The doctor said he had better have his way about it—it could not hurt him; so one day we managed to get him out on the terrace. It was a lovely autumn morning, warm and still as summer, and my poor friend sat for a while on the bench near the porch, drinking in the soft air as if it gave him new life, and gazing on the familiar landscape before him as if he could not enjoy it enough."

"I feel so much better to-day, Bel," he said at last; "but I think I'll go in now: I'm getting tired."

"We helped him back into the house, and he suddenly dropped on a chair in the hall, saying that he must rest,—laid his head on his wife's shoulder, and was gone in a moment."

"Poor thing! what a shock for her!"

"At first she was inconsolable: she shut herself up and would see nobody. For more than twelve months she never went outside the door; and though after a time she admitted her old friends, and began to go about the village herself again, I don't think she has ever thoroughly got over her loss. Even now she resolutely declines all visiting. She did not lay aside her widow's mourning for four years; and I believe she never went along the road where the accident happened until about six months ago. In fact, she is so nervous about driving, even with the steadiest horses, that it is a perfect penance to her to go anywhere."

"I don't wonder at it, after what you have told me," I answered. And I never now hear the subject mentioned without thinking of Annabel's Dream, and its melancholy fulfilment.

H. D. L.

FINITE AND INFINITE.

EVEN as engineers, in describing foreign and unfamiliar measurements, commence by giving a familiar scale of comparison, to which the reader may, when needful, refer; so, on this occasion, shall I. This is indispensable; for, trippingly as the human tongue gives utterance to such little words as millions and billions, the human mind, without some ready comparison to fall back upon, is sometimes unable to grasp the very large purport of the same. Thousands represent about the very largest numeral idea that the mind can lay hold of without some special training for the occasion. That a million is a thousand thousands; and a billion is a million millions, we most of us know. As for the millions, the number of their component parts is not so overwhelmingly great but that a mind, if it be not torpid below the average, may try to build them up ideally out of some individual units feigned for the occasion: they may be sand-grains piled up into a heap, or inches a million times repeated on an extended line; or perhaps the idea of time may be found most congenial to some temperaments,—millions or billions of seconds being collected together into minutes, hours, days, and years. Leaving the millions to take care of themselves, let us attack the problem of aggregating a billion seconds, seeing what they come to. The calculator is sitting down, watch in hand; the watch ticking seconds as usual: how long would that calculator have to count wearily on before the aggregate of a billion seconds would have been ticked off in one large sum total? *Just thirty-one thousand six hundred and seventy-five years*, should the calculator live so long! Such, then, is the scale of measurement which the reader may refer to purposes of contemplation, so often as I shall have to write of billions.

Some of the most exalted thoughts that can leave their impress on the mind are suggested by the words "finite" and "infinite." The idea of finality—a stopping short, or ceasing to be—is so difficult to realize, the endeavour to do so puts the mind so painfully on the stretch, that, for very change and solace, imagination flies to the antipodes, and encounters a difficulty no less great in endeavouring to grasp the infinite.

Many persons deceive themselves in what concerns ideas of the finite—*finality*. To many minds, notions of coming to an end are suggested by the very conditions of human existence, by the grand climax of death, not to mention thousands of passing phenomena, combustion amongst the foremost. This can only happen to uncultivated minds, however; or, more properly speaking, to minds that have been cultivated only up to that limit of little knowledge which the poet has told us is so dangerous. It is very rare that the uncultivated savage holds to the belief that with death comes annihilation. Vague and undefined though his ideas of a future may be, the true savage, nevertheless, usually believes in such a state of existence. The peculiar form of scepticism which refuses to

accredit a state of post-mortuary existence is the product of that crude and superficial civilization, the first evidence of which is a mind arrogant in the power of its own judgment. The wild flowers of poetry that bloomed upon the savage heath have been plucked up, and the soil upturned by the delving spade of philosophy; but no golden crops as yet have sprung to compensate for the flowers cast away. All is a black, blank tilth for the present, harsh and unattractive,—a thing of the earth, earthy.

If the idea of finality—the *fnite*—be easy to grasp, this result can only happen from insufficient knowledge, from an inadequate acquaintance with illustrative cases. With more knowledge come more difficulties, but not till then; whereas, on the other hand, the words Infinity, Eternity, beget ideas that wholly transcend the faculty of the mind to grasp, savage or sage, uneducated or educated; the idea being one that puzzles all minds alike; and yet the faith in an eternity, an infinity, is one from which no cultivated mind can escape. The very fact of our separate individual existence cannot well fail to set the mind thinking on conditions and characteristics of the finite and the infinite. That we do exist, is a proposition so self-obvious that it needs no demonstration. That after death each of us shall exist, is an actual tenet of belief with a very large majority, and a professed tenet of disbelief held by a very small minority. *A professed tenet*, because, if the negative hypothesis be provisionally accepted, and the specific elements of it analyzed out, then the issue is arrived at that the tenet of annihilation with death is very far from leading to a deduction sharp and decisive. The thinker's mind will be found wafted away to some vague realm of dream and cloudland, and mist and haze, where species are blent in confusion; where reason, veiled and shrouded, yielding to influences around, has become even as a corpse.

Once upon a time most of us will probably have met with some individual who professed to believe in the finality of death,—ay, *professed* no more, and by these tokens. He will have felt aches and pains, after the manner of mankind; will have suffered the larger and smaller worries of life, friends lost, loves gratified and loves unrequited,—major worries both, to be set down as equals in bracket. He will have experienced the trouble which springs from bills come back, and buttons come out. To expand the list there is no need, seeing that of troubles, major and minor, each one of us, during his individual life, will have had competent experience. Now the question is, why anybody actually believing in the finality of death should condescend to suffer any sort of worry, major or minor. In times gone by there might have been a plea for the *statu quo*, based upon the presumed pain attendant upon suicide. To rush bodily against one's drawn sword certainly implies some sort of contempt for pain beyond the ability of many individuals to acquire; and still more proudly self-confident must an insulted Japanese be to expose his writhing viscera to day glare by the deliberate process of a crucial gashing that constitutes the *hari kiri*; but civilized means of compassing self-destruction promptly

and painlessly are so numerous and so well known, that, but for some impending mystery hereafter, *going to die* might be made hardly less agreeable than *going to sleep*.

Lived there ever a human being who, professing to believe in the finality of death, did not also believe or feel convinced that grass would grow greener over the grave because of the corpse underlying? And if our illustrative sceptic believe thus much, then do we prove him to have wandered to the region of clouds and mists, blent species, and shrouded reason, to which we anon made reference: belief in the finality of death is demonstrated in his case to be a pretence, no more. He concedes that materials formerly actuated by a vitality whilst in the body are, in the growing grass, actuated by a vitality out of the body, and thenceforward to other conditions of vitality to which no limit is apparent. The fact is, that so soon as the mind begins to contemplate the materials of a human body in reference to the cycles of living existence they can go through, the real difficulty is to avoid believing with Moschus in the eternity of matter.

But a dissentient may argue thus:—In vain you make manifest to my mind the perpetuity of matter. That is not the question. The eternity of existence after death refers to the immaterial part of man, to the spirit—the soul. At this point arrived, let us pause and think; clearing the path our judgment must follow from certain embarrassments needlessly imposed. It may be that the dual idea of two essences—matter and spirit—is a convention, and only a convention. Paley remarked long ago that one single essence or entity—whether we chose to call it matter, or whether, adopting a tenet of Berkeley, we chose to call it spirit—is ample to accord with every canon of Christian orthodoxy: admitting a full belief in eternity of existence, consciousness, and personal identity, associated with responsibility. By conceding the duality of two essences, matter and spirit, the progress of metaphysical thought is indeed somewhat facilitated; just as, the postulate of two electrical fluids granted, the mind rises more easily to the conception of many complex electrical phenomena. The latter concession is one not based upon actual belief; it is merely a convention. It admits of being regarded in the sense of a piece of scaffolding, to be taken down and cast aside when the electrical edifice has been built up in the mind; and similarly, it may be, should we regard the usually accepted duality of matter and spirit.

The human mind is so constituted that it is unable to rise to the conception of any one entity, save by instituting a comparison—sometimes evident, sometimes latent—between it and a dual complement or counterpart. Thus when mentally and by postulate, so to speak, we have invested what we choose to call matter with certain attributes, we make those attributes stand out clearly, as we think, by feigning a second essence wholly devoid of those attributes. This done, we usually call this idealization—this dual complement—"spirit," and are so far in accord with opinions which the majority of individuals have ever entertained.

To the natural philosopher, an idea of duality may come under another guise. He having observed that identical forms of matter under circumstances which are identical ever act in the same way, humbly recording proximate causes without dogmatizing on the nature of them, simply denominates these causes of invisible action *forces*.

Here, at length, then, do we find a clue to the bewilderment of him who, professing to believe in the finality of death, doubts not for an instant but that grass would spring all the greener because of its springing from a grave. Quite unconsciously to himself, he has acquired certain vague ideas of force, as affecting matter with certain immutable laws. The forces, with their attendant laws, have come to be for his mind the needful duality. In respect of duration, he believes, like Moschus, in the eternity of matter; and force-law would be with him synonymous with Deity, were not the concession of the eternity of matter inconsistent with the assumption of a creative intelligence.

Amongst the philosophic debates to which speculations on the nature and attributes of matter have at different times given rise, that relative to the ultimate divisibility or indivisibility of it is assuredly the most curious. First ideas on this subject, for or against, make a very slight call on the mind for illustrative conditions. The idea of any visible and tangible object, not so hard but that it may be cut or broken, amply suffices: a lump of lead, for example. Having selected a lump of this metal for illustration, it may evidently be divided into two or more pieces; then, pursuing the division, each of the two or more pieces may be further subdivided, and so on continuously, until the eye ceases to recognize the parts divided because of their smallness. Having pursued the divisional operation to the farthest limit permitted by human vision, the question next arises (and it is one of the most interesting that can arise in the whole domains of physics), whether a being of unlimited power of eye discrimination and unlimited delicacy of touch could go on dividing the lead indefinitely. Though we have accepted a lump of lead as our first ideal illustration, an aggregate of any other form of matter—whether solid, liquid, or gaseous—would have sufficed equally well for the occasion; the question that presents itself in each case being, whether matter be or be not ultimately divisible.

On a first view of the case, the reply furnished by the mind to its own questionings is likely to be affirmative. Thus the position may be urged that, although human instruments can neither subdivide a lump of lead *ad infinitum*, nor human eyes recognize the parts, assuming division to have been accomplished, still the mind can apprehend and feign to itself the idea of such infinite division with the same readiness that it can feign to itself a mathematical point or a mathematical line. Now this was precisely the argument of Plato and Aristotle among the Greeks, of Leibnitz and Des Cartes among modern philosophers. A fallacy lurks in the argument, however, as will soon be made manifest. When, eyes and

fingers failing, the mind sets to work, endeavouring to think out what hands and eyes could do, were hands and eyes only delicate enough, what does the mind ideally accomplish?—to what conclusion does it lead the reasoner? What does the mind ideally achieve? Does it prove the infinite divisibility of the lead, or space occupied by the lead? Evidently, if we come to consider about it, the latter—only the latter:

For aught the deepest ratiocination teaches to the contrary, lead, though soft and divisible in mass, may be composed of particles of such extreme smallness, that no human eye can ever see them; no balance weigh them individually, if separated; so hard that no power in existence can shatter, cut, or break them. In all these assumptions there is nothing opposed to evidence, nothing that militates against our credence. Being hard and indivisible under the operation of any known force, these assumed particles of extreme smallness may well be designated atoms—from *α* and *τομή*, which, did our language permit the manufacture of words when wanted, as the German language does, might be translated *uncut-able*. Whatever the smallness of these atoms, each of them will necessarily fill a space, which latter must be regarded as admitting of division and subdivision *ad infinitum*.

The line of reasoning, then, of Plato and the non-atonists tells for nothing, either *pro* or *con*, in the subject of debate. There was a time when philosophers hoped, perhaps more than half hoped, to settle the point by evidence of microscopic observation. That hope has long vanished, driven away by the accumulated evidence of experiments, all leading up to the conclusion that, if atoms of matter there be, human eyes, even aided by the microscope, can never expect to see them.

In illustration of this, let gold, instead of lead, be the metal to which our regards are directed; and let us just think out, if possible, the almost inconceivable smallness of the atoms or ultimate particles of gold as demonstrated by the mere mechanical process of extension. In the gilding of silver wire, a grain of gold is distributed over a surface of 1,400 square inches; and as, when examined under a microscope, the gold upon the thousandth of a linear inch, or one millionth of a square inch, is readily visible, we hence prove, by the result of this experiment, that gold may be divided into particles of one billion and four hundred millionth of a square inch in size at least, and still without reaching the ultimate limit.

In commenting on this experiment, and the deduction to which it conducts an inquirer, let the circumstance not fail to be remembered, that mechanical extension is only a crude and imperfect mode of effecting subdivision, by comparison with chemical solution. As a familiar example of this, we need no more recondite case to begin with than the enormous extent of subdivision, still not reaching the ultimate or atomic limit, that iron is proved capable of, by the evidence of common ink. Ordinary black writing-ink, as most persons are aware, is a weak solution of tanno-

gallate of iron: assume, now, that an ordinary wineglassful of ink contains a grain of metallic iron dissolved, and consider, firstly, how minute a quantity of iron must exist in the line of a fine writing up-stroke. Were we to impose on ourselves the task of writing down in figures the weighed amount of iron contained in a fine writing up-stroke, the result, if arrived at, would almost overpower the numeration table. But this is only the fringe or boundary of that wild waste of numerals which a further exploration after the iron atoms would land us upon, if we should elect to pursue the train of suggestions.

Lead, gold, and iron are simple bodies respectively, mere dead metals: the almost inconceivable minuteness of their ultimate particles is not so provocative of wonder as the smallness of the particles of compound organized substances; substances, that is to say, endowed, or having once been endowed, with life. Linen yarn has been spun so exquisitely fine, that one pound of the resulting thread would extend over no less than one thousand four hundred and thirty-two English miles; hence seventeen pounds three ounces of the same thread would have sufficed to encircle the world. Now of such thread a portion not weighing more than the hundred and twenty-seven millionth of a grain is distinctly visible under the microscope. When we come to remember that even the smallest visible point of linen yarn is organized; that it once lived; and that, small though it be, it is nevertheless made up of three elements—carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen,—the atoms of which must still be smaller; then, indeed may the weary mind well come to the conclusion that the quest after these ultimate atoms, if they exist, is but vanity,—a pursuit wholly transcending the feeble powers with which the Creator has endowed human beings.

Nevertheless—short of actually seeing, touching, or weighing tests, to which our senses are already shown to be incompetent—the ultimate indivisibility or atomic constitution of matter is a belief now forced on the mind by the strongest of evidence, the codification of which is known to philosophers as the “atomic theory.” Inasmuch as these words may seem to come before readers not much accustomed to deal with speculative philosophy in a sort of learnedly repulsive guise, it may be as well to avoid reference to the train of chemical experiments, on evidence springing from which the now universal belief in the ultimate indivisibility of matter is founded, and to substitute for that evidence a strictly parallel illustration. Let the reader banish from his mind every lingering memory of the transcendental speculations concerning the finite and the infinite with which the writer of this has pestered him, and, fancying himself a child once again in the nursery, heed well the following illustrative case. My experimental child is at play, weighing out pinches of sand taken from a bag at random with a pair of very delicate scales. Between the child and his nurse the compact has been established, that for all the parts of grain weights of sand pinched at random out of the bag the child shall receive a guinea, but for all the whole grain weights, nothing. Well stimulated thus,

the child dips and dips, weighs and weighs, but in no case finds a half or quarter grain weight of sand in his scale pan. In vain does he scoop out quantities ever varying,—sometimes large, at other times small; still he never achieves the golden prize promised for the never-appearing fraction. He gets an aggregate of, we may assume, two grains, three grains, four and five grains, and so on for any arbitrary number of entire grains; but such a result as a grain and a half, or quarter, &c., two grains and a half, or quarter, &c., being never achieved, the child earns no guineas.

Pause we now to inquire what deduction would necessarily spring from this evidence? Why, clearly, that in the bag there existed no sand particles weighing individually less than one grain. Such, then, is our parallel; and, with one variation, it very closely represents the real chemical evidence on which the belief in the non-infinite divisibility of matter is founded. Dip where we will, and as we may, into the treasury of chemical elements, we always find that they unite with each other in even quantities, their compounds reveal no fractional parts; whence it may be fairly concluded—indeed, there seems no rational alternative—that matter is composed of ultimate atoms, as the child's sand was made up of ultimate grains. Let the fact be borne in mind, however, that whereas the child can pick out one grain of sand, the chemist is unable to pick out one atom; whence it follows that he cannot discover the true measurement or the true weight of a single atom. But having conceded the existence of atoms, he ascertains the ratio of their weights—in other words, by how much one atom of one material is heavier or lighter than another—in a way that a second nursery game of parallel significance shall make manifest.

Our experimental child has already proved by thousands of weighings, let us assume, that the smallest difference that could occur between one weighed result and another amounted to one grain. Let now a second bag of sand be given him to operate upon, and consider that he now finds the smallest difference two grains. Would not the inference be that each individual grain of sand number two must weigh twice as much as each individual grain of sand number one? Even similarly does the chemist find that, for any arbitrary weight of hydrogen capable of entering into combination, eight times that weight of oxygen would be necessary, and thirty-six of chlorine. On evidence like this is based the atomic theory, the application of which, or rather the evidence on which it depends, is no less invaluable to chemistry than the theory itself is interesting, when contemplated in relation with a topic of debate that had been fruitlessly discussed by philosophers, from Moschus down to Dalton, and which, but for the circumstantial evidence supplied by chemistry, might have remained no more advanced than it was prior to the Trojan war—the time when Moschus flourished.

J. SCOFFERN, M.B.

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEPRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XL.

THE WEDDING LICENCE.

THE two ladies had rather a funny interview with the apothecary in Killarney, of whom they purchased the excellent cosmetic which Madeleine had prescribed for her friend. He was not by any means a lean apothecary: he was a very comfortably fed one, full of smiles and good humour, and was very much diverted when two ladies asked him for half a pound of arsenic. He had a whole hogshead of it standing open in a corner of his shop, looking very white and tempting, like the finest flour. He remarked, jollily, that he had difficulty in hindering the children from stealing it, fancying it was sugar. "Nasty little cormorants, they would soon have enough of it!" he said. He had not heard of the law relating to the discoloration of the substance when sold, the Legislature in general contenting itself with making laws for that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland, without troubling itself about enforcing them. But he had heard that arsenic was very good in making a green dye; several cases of wall-paper poisoning having occurred within his practice. He therefore made no manner of objection to selling half a pound, to make a strong suffusion, with copperas and verdigris, for a green shawl. Perhaps he might have hesitated to sell five or six grains. It was only through excess of innocent harmlessness of intent that Madeleine insisted on putting her name down with her friend's, as purchasers of the drug. *She* took it away with her, in order to apportion the proper quantities in the cosmetic lotions for that friend's complexion.

This was all very well. But it was a thing rather unlucky—though to be apprehended—that as the two friends came out of the apothecary's shop together, they almost ran against Mr. Behringbright.

He was returning from seeing Lady Glengarriff off in her special train—and I should think he did not expect such a piece of good luck, for he started on encountering Madeleine; and he was a good deal more surprised, it was at once plain, at the company he found her in, than in her own somewhat unexpected apparition.

It is a great thing when the mind is pre-occupied by some overruling and masterful idea. All the minor shocks of fate pass unnoticed. Madeleine Graham was not at all troubled in her self-possession by the encounter. She put a bold front on things, and, with a generous devotion that did her nerves, at all events, the highest credit, introduced Mademoiselle Lorient at once to Mr. Behringbright, as one of her kindest and most

estimable school instructresses of yore, whom she had accidentally met with in Killarney. Olympe also took her cue with professional dexterity, and with a deep curtsy to Mr. Behringbright intimated that she hoped also for the honour of his inestimable patronage in an enterprise she had undertaken in that charming little town—which was to give a few recitations, in imitation of Mesdames Rachel and Ristori, on her way to “the Cork” for the same purpose.

It cannot be denied Mr. Behringbright looked anything but a gracious patron in response to this appeal. He made rather a gruff reply than otherwise.

“I am astonished at your impudence, woman!” and he drew Madeleine’s arm in his own, and marched her off, without the least ceremony of parting salute due to a lady, and a woman of talent. At least so Olympe thought, bitterly repeating to herself a thousand times,—

“But with these letters in my possession, revenge will at some time also be at my obedience on this beast of an English!”

Mr. Behringbright explained, as he walked Madeleine away, that this Frenchwoman was a most improper person for her to encourage; that she was notoriously a person of bad character; that Madeleine must never on any account be seen with such a person again. And, conceiving that the time had now arrived, he divulged to Miss Graham sufficient particulars of his own first acquaintance with Mademoiselle Lorient to satisfy even her innocence that she must have had very wicked designs upon herself once upon a time.

Madeleine was much astonished.

“Oh, how strangely they used to hide everything from us at school!” she naively observed. “I thought Olympe was only dismissed for taking me to the play without the consent of the Misses Sparx, and that is what rendered me the more willing to make her any reparation in my power. And were you really there, at the play? I do not remember ever to have seen you; and yet—and yet, dear Behringbright, when we met on the steamer, it seemed to me as if I had been looking out for you all my life!”

A fond pressure of the arm linked in his own acknowledged the tender influence of the expression. In truth, Mr. Behringbright was more in love than ever. He proved it as they walked back to Prospect Palace.

“The goodness of your heart deceives you so much, darling,” he said, “that I think I ought to have a better right than I yet possess to guide and restrain its rash impulses. And let the Glengariffs persist as they may in their absurd prejudices against you, I will give you a proof, if you will suffer me, of my own unbounded confidence in you. If you can dispense with a ridiculous and hampering parade, I will marry you as soon as I can get a licence. Your parents will not disapprove of me, I know, as a son-in-law, and I have a right to presume on their consent, under the circumstances. Will you—can you—do you yield it?”

Madeleine was so delighted with this overture that she knew not well

how to reply for the moment. A great crime might possibly yet be spared her,—a crime fraught with doubtful and tremendous consequences.

"I do consent, dearest love!" she said, with a warmth of acquiescence that ought to have gratified her lover, not knowing its motives. "When shall it be?"

"I will drive over to Tralee to-morrow for a licence," he replied. "I would go this afternoon, only I should be too late; and I have even solemnly promised Lady Glengariff to deliver a letter she has given me for her son with my own hands to-night."

"She requires you, no doubt, to witness to the fact of this French gentleman's proposals for Emily," Madeleine replied; who, though sufficiently aware of the dangers of delay, could not decently press the point. "And I own I should fear some terrible collision between them, if Lord Glengariff were not chained to his bed by the injuries he has received. As it is, you may fearlessly prepare him for the final shock, which will either be his release from life or love, merely by delivering these tidings. On the other hand, your magnanimous confidence in me will be gloriously vindicated by the marriage you propose! Meanwhile, dear Behringbright, if you would give me leave, I would endeavour to settle the other disastrous affair in a quiet manner. Aunt and myself will invite Monsieur Le Tellier to our hotel; we will reason with him on the baseness and perversity of his conduct,—on the little chance there is of his standing out upon terms, securing him better ones with you! In short, we will try to prevail upon him to hasten at once to Belfast, and make the only honourable reparation in his power, by marrying Miss Maughan unconditionally and at once. We should have a much better chance of influencing him than a man, and—"

"Influencing him!" replied Mr. Behringbright, indignantly. "The only means of influence I should ever think of using with such a rascal would be by kicking him to the altar!"

"For goodness' sake, then, promise me never to see him again, or Emily's prospects are irretrievably ruined!" said Madeleine. "Promise me not to leave Glengariff, excepting to go to Tralee to-morrow; and meanwhile I hope to be enabled to effect all the good I suggest as possible."

"Not to see you, loveliest?"

"As you go through the town, perhaps, in the morning; but at present where are we going?"

"To the little jeweller's round by the chapel, to measure your finger, that I may buy you a ring in a quieter style than the one with which I plighted you mine, in Tralee!—Or stay; as that seemed to fit your dear little digit very well, I can take it as a measure."

"No," replied Madeleine, very firmly—"no; I will never part with that dear pledge, while we two are destined to remain one! Besides, dear, it is a good deal too large, and I was so afraid of its dropping off that I put it by in my dressing-case when I came out."

This was a little contradictory, but lovers in such cases do not notice contradictions.

Mr. Behringbright and his betrothed dined together that day, and spent the rest of it in the agreeable manner usual between two plighted lovers, who have nothing else to think or do but to be happy in each other's society. But as Madeleine would not allow him—from a nice punctilio, which he respected—to remain at Prospect Palace all night, and still less would suffer him to go to the “Red Herring,” he was in a manner obliged to return to Glengariff Castle to sleep; else I do believe he had altogether forgotten he had a letter to deliver to the young lord there, which was of rather particular consequence to him at any rate.

CHAPTER XLI.

SHADOWS BEFORE EVENTS.

ALL seemed going very well—swimmingly, as they say—with Madeleine Graham; but somehow she did not rest peacefully that night; she had uncomfortable dreams, extremely absurd ones, too,—reminiscences of old school readings, no doubt provoked by her recent confabulation with her ex-French instructress.

The reader has most likely forgotten how the eldest Miss Sparx reproved Emily Maughan, in the second chapter of this history, for supposing, by a too rapid process of induction, that people were *hung on hemp*. Yet this nonsensical association of ideas chased and tormented Madeleine through that whole miserable night; and her fancy, wandering in the manufactories and bleach-fields of her native Belfast, represented to her an endless fabrication of the material, and always into ropes—ropes—ropes to hang people on! Merciful Heaven! nothing but ropes to hang people on! The whole human race, it appeared in her delirious slumbers, was in a process of going to be hanged, and deservedly so: neither youth, nor beauty, nor sex to be spared!

It is really a pity that dreams have been adjudged a superstition. I should say they are often a correct mirroring of one's inner consciousness, when we are no longer attitudinizing to ourselves, and occasionally present perspectives of results to one's little doings, which may be truer to the probabilities of the case than the elaborate efforts at self-deception usually dignified by the name of reasoning.

Still the thing, it was evident to Madeleine's waking thoughts, *must be!* A decisive note arrived from Mr. Behringbright to her the first thing in the morning. It begged her pardon in a very eloquent and passionate manner; but it informed her that, in compliance with a distractedly earnest request of Lord Glengariff, he had consented not to pursue their plan of an immediate marriage—not, in short, until the explanations concerning Emily Maughan had taken place. The unfortunate young nobleman was

evidently labouring under a monomaniacal possession; but he had threatened to rise from his bed, and prevent his friend and guest by main force from leaving the castle until he had clearly ascertained that Emily had no prior claim upon his honour! His lordship, indeed, went on so wildly, that Dr. Bucktrout himself assured Mr. Behringbright he could not answer for the consequences if he persisted in refusing compliance, —and so, with the greatest reluctance, he had yielded.

A motive which his sweet Madeleine could best appreciate had influenced him, however, he added, as powerfully as the desperation and entreaties of the unhappy son of his dearest friend. But the difficulty must soon be removed, Mr. Behringbright stated, and no obstacle could then exist to their happiness. Meanwhile, his beloved girl must promise to write to him twice a day. To hear from her would be the only consolation for the species of captivity under which the demented young Earl seemed resolved to detain him, for he would scarcely suffer him for a moment out of his sight.

Madeleine did write a very kind, tender, and modest reply to this missive, by the same messenger. You would have said she had never written to a man before in her life, much less to a lover. She was her dear Behringbright's ever true and faithful Madeleine, and she esteemed it her duty already to honour and obey him in whatever might be most to his wishes. He was quite right to comply with the poor frantic young nobleman's desires in the manner indicated. A short delay could be of little consequence, and it would, perhaps, be better to conduct things in the regular way, and have mamma's and papa's consent first. To be sure, there was no need to fear a refusal; but they had a right to be consulted: it would look better. They could easily wait for a few days or weeks, &c., &c., &c.

After this, Miss Graham wrote a much more lively and fluent note to Monsieur Camille Le Tellier, at the "Red Herring" Tavern, informing him, with veiled significance in every period, that Mr. Behringbright would be detained at the castle that day by his friend's illness; and as they might not soon have another opportunity, she hoped he would favour her aunt and herself by accepting an invitation to dinner, at five o'clock, at Prospect Palace. They could have a little private conversation on matters that would interest him. He was to be *sure and come*, and to come alone, and he would find them without any visitors. He should pretend, however, to the people at the inn, that he would be home early, for fear inquiries were made by any one in his absence. But Madeleine hoped they should find interesting topics of conversation *relating to his future establishment*, to detain him for a few pleasant hours! The messenger was to wait for an answer.

Our friend Rooney—for we do not think ourselves above any of our creations of decent repute—found Monsieur Le Tellier at the place he was directed to. Not, perhaps, in the best of tempers, for he was getting anxious at hearing from nobody, and wondering at Mr. Behringbright's

not returning to hold some sort of satisfactory colloquy with him as to the amount of his expectations, and the particular form in which he would like to have them gratified. Moreover, he was at the moment undergoing the banter of his American friend, who had called upon him after an interval of a day's total neglect, to deliver the note Miss Graham had confided to his care.

Flamingo was, in truth, taunting poor Camille—and most unmercifully—on the frigid style of the response.

"No occasion to pack it in ice, to bring it nice and fresh, though it has been a long time on the road, you'll see when you read it! Truth is, there was a little fellow in the hotel who, his mother and sisters thought, had *delirium tremens*, and begged me to come up to help hold him down. But I did it much more sensibly,—got him a lot more brandy and water, till he lay down of his own accord, quite comfortable. Only I made myself ill in keeping him company in the medicine, and slept like a top half to-day. Here, however, I am at last; and what are you going to stand, in rhubarb and magnesia, for a love-letter like this?"

Camille, agreeably to his promise to Madeleine, wished to retract his former insinuations. "Ah, bah! I was only joking," he said, certainly without looking very jocular.

Flamingo Brown, however, got very fierce and bullying on the expression.

"Only a-joking, sir!" he exclaimed; "then be darned if I understand joking with a young lady's character in that 'here way! and I take upon myself to say that, if she wishes it—or if she don't wish it—I have a good mind on my own account to give you a tarnation handsome cowhiding for your impudence! And I venture to affirm I couldn't do anything more acceptable to the young lady, not even if I was to make her an offer of marriage, plump, myself!"

"You insult me, sir!" said Camille, blusteringly.

"Or I've not made my meaning clear!" replied the American, fiercely.

"And I would resent it, if this were the proper place or time," said Le Tellier, very mildly. "But nonsense, my dear Mr. Brown!" he continued, with a forced attempt at liveliness and unconcern; "why should two old friends like you and me fall out about a silly girl, who is nothing to either of us, and never can be? Besides, I am in no spirits for an encounter, *mon cher*, at present," he continued, in a really very melancholy and downcast way. "My fighting genius stands rebuked, like that of Brutus when he saw Cæsar's ghost the night before Philippi! I have not seen Cæsar's ghost, it is true, but I have seen my own! You make great eyes at me, Mr. Brown, but I am not mad; though it is assuredly true I suffer under a very great depressment of spirits."

"At raising of spirits, I'm of the opinion rather, Master Le Tellier," replied the American, attempting to express an enlightened incredulity in his poor pun. But, like most of his hard, and brazen, and materialistic countrymen, he was at heart very superstitious, and had the common

leaning and hankering of the vulgar after the wonderful and strange in the discovery of relations with that unknown world, in which they scarcely, perhaps, believe at all. His curiosity was, therefore, excited, and for a time the notion on which he had probably started, of figuring chiefly as champion of the future Mrs. Behringbright, changed under the new impulse.

"And so you've seen a ghost, have you? And, of all the ghosts in the world, your own! What makes you think so, you young sighthaw donkey, you?" he resumed, in a more friendly manner.

"I will tell you, sir," replied Camille, with solemnity. "Perhaps, with your enlightenment, you may offer me some explanation that can reconcile me to more comfortable convictions than at present possess my imagination. Your countrymen are noted for an incredulous sagacity, not easily the dupe of the illusions of the heart or fancy—and the ancient superstitions of the world have no root in your fresh and uncultivated intellects. Let me see; what shall I relate? Suffice it, as a preliminary, to state that, wearied of calculations and conjectures as to the possible combinations of destiny in an approaching conjuncture, I descended last night to the coffee-room of this hotel, in the hope to find some relief for the exhaustion of my mind in the society of my fellow-man, however inferior in social position; this inn being certainly none of the very best. Witness the coffee-room itself, strewn with sawdust as if for an execution, and with small metal boxes placed all round beside every chair for the convenience of the smokers, who smoke only pipes. But, by a chance which I know not whether to call happy or not, I find in this apartment, besides a group of rustics who puff a rank tobacco and drink their *whiskey* in silence, a certain professor of a university who is here on a geological excursion. Fatigued with the pursuits of the day, he, too, is refreshing himself—resting his mind, as he told me—over a glass of an excellent mixture, which I know not whether you call it in your great country also, a toddy?"

"Sometimes; we know well enough, however, what it means in any country," assented Flamingo, who listened with evident attention, though at the mention of tobacco he drew a handful from his pocket, and, smiling contemptuously at the spittoons, lighted a short meerschaum, and dispensed with their use.

"This professor was originally a Scotchman, though he had become, by long residence and citizenship in this island, an Irishman."

"Beg your pardon there, Mr. Le Tellier; a Scotchman never *can* become an Irishman: 'taint in the natur of the animal," interrupted Flamingo.

"Be it so; I only mention the circumstance to account for another of more importance. Necessarily perceiving in each other a degree of similar intelligence and position that entitled us to speak, the Professor and I entered into conversation to the exclusion of the rest of the company;

and, in the first place, we discussed the problem of the reality or not of the imputed Irish wit. The Professor declared to me that he had never been able to discover it, and that for his part he believed the whole report a delusion, and that those who had discovered the wit of the Irish people had brought it all with them into the country. For his part, he had never had the luck to light on any of those wonderful, heaven-born Irish peasant humorists who amuse the world in jest-books. On the contrary, he maintained that the Hibernians are a people of the most melancholy and sombre genius, and he instanced the dismal belief in a species of spirit called a Banshee, universal in Ireland, which is constantly engaged in shrieking warnings of death in an appalling manner in the night. The Glengariff family, he stated to me in illustration, enjoyed the deplorable privilege of one of these fearful attendants; and the recent accident, so likely to result in the extinction of an ancient race, had been announced a long time ago, in this way, to Lord Glengariff's mother.

"With a commendable nationality, the Scotch Professor then proceeded to observe that, in his opinion, the supernatural fancies prevalent among his countrymen indicated a much sublimer sense of the terrible and awful; and he called to witness the dreadful phantasm designated a *Wraith*. On my demanding an explanation of this singular term, he favoured me with the statement that a wraith is the ghost of a living being, which appears to him as a warning of approaching departure,—a ghost which is in all respects the exact projection of the figure of the unfortunate person beholding it—a shadowy repetition, a reflection, a *double*!"

"Everybody knows that. I don't see the Professor's great discovery in all this," said Flamingo Brown, with an attempt at the pooh-pooh which did not seem a success, for it was evident he awaited what was to follow with anxiety.

"Neither did the superstition strike me at the time as worthy of the immense stress laid upon its terrors by the learned Professor Doubleday," Camille resumed. "Nevertheless, I had not heard of it before, and doubtless it made some impression on my imagination. A considerable interval had, nevertheless, elapsed; the Professor had returned to his quarters at another hotel, and I had remained musing by the coffee-house fire until everybody had departed,—until the waiter, who had the tramp of a cart-horse, entered to close the shutters, and admonish me that it was near midnight. I must have wandered far from the recollection of the discussion on the Scotch apparition; I remember, indeed, I was thinking only of my old father at Marseilles, training his nasturtiums up the bars of a prison where he has long been confined for debt, and rejoicing in the tidings of my approaching good fortune, which he shall share. I am not altogether destitute of a certain natural sensibility, which the world has not been enabled to root effectually out of my heart.

"Well, then, taking a spluttering tallow candle, which was all my inn afforded, I ascended to my chamber; and now I swear to you what I am

about to relate is exactly the truth, without exaggeration. The moment I entered it, I perceived, in a fog of moonlight which shines over my leather portmanteau directly placed beneath the window, A FIGURE WHICH WAS MYSELF IN EVERY PARTICULAR,—with the exception that it was ghastly pale as ashes—and that it was swallowing, with many wry faces and contortions, a cup apparently of some liquid like coffee, only it was all lit with a faint, tremulous blue flame, which shed a horrible light upon the livid, corpse-like face.

"Yoiks! you don't say so! I shouldn't have licked my lips to see *that*, by no means, as I'm a living sinner!" said the American, looking considerably aghast himself. "But I know how it was. You had swallowed too much of that same whiskey toddy, and thought you saw yourself going it still—on the leather box."

"Not so. I am extremely abstemious in every respect but coffee. I had only taken a single small glass," replied Camille, very sadly and seriously, "for which I paid *three-pence*."

"Then I'll tell you another way how it was. You saw yourself in a looking-glass right ahead, and didn't calkellate at the time what it was," consoled Flamingo, who really himself did not relish the dismal fancy.

"But there is only a very small mirror in the apartment, which is placed in the opposite direction. I was *upright*, with a candle in my hand; and this figure was *seated*, with a *cup* of some beverage—not a *glass*."

"Wal, then, most likely the window-panes had been recently polished, and reflected as good as a looking-glass. Anyhow—nohow—I'll never believe such stuff!" said Flamingo, resolutely. "Still, I don't wonder at its having taken you down a peg or two, for it might a man of courage and grip; and I'll not press my point about that that gal, for fear you should raly pluck up and show fight, when I should be bound to swallow you in self-defence, and the ghost come trew!"

The American laughed at his own drollery in this observation, and as Camille also gave a faint giggle, harmony seemed restored. It was at this moment that Rooney arrived with Madeleine's note of invitation.

It was easy to see how the young man—after ceremoniously asking leave of Mr. Brown to peruse it—brightened up over the contents. Yielding, in fact, to one of his imprudent impulses, Camille handed it over at once triumphantly to the American sceptic.

"Ah! ah! Does this look as if I am scarcely the commonest acquaintance with this young lady?" he inquired.

"No; it looks a deal stronger than that, I own. There's a sort of double meaning running throughout it that rather supports your brag. *Le Tellier*," Flamingo pronounced, after a careful study of the document submitted to him. "But 'taint the same handwriting as she wrote you in by me! How's that? Tell you what, there's some queer mystery about this whole gal and affair, or my father was a buffalo!"

"Ah, my folly again! I am always in the wrong. Give it me back!" exclaimed Camille, snatching the note from the eager scrutiny of his compeer.

"Have it, and welcome. But if this note was quilled by Miss Graham, this other wasn't, and I claim it as my treasure-trove!" returned the American, in his turn snatching up the note he had brought, and which Monsieur Le Tellier had flung down on the table in the room where their colloquy took place. And as he pocketed it, and looked very fierce, and as if he meant to keep it, Camille pretended to laugh assentingly, and called for pen and ink to write his acceptance of the invitation he had received.

When he had nearly completed this task, however, the American, who had been looking on with an appearance of profound reflection, remarked,—

"Tell you what, though; I wouldn't go to the invite if I was you! She's a rale out-and-outer, you may depend, where she takes it, though not the partic'lar sort for exportation. There's a devilish corner of mischief in her eye,—and hasn't she asked you to dinner? So just you remember that ar WRAITH, and stop at home, and dine at your own expense!"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Camille, with evident excitement. "She harm me! Madeleine Graham harm me! For what purpose? How could she dare? What would be the use? No," he added, but rather to himself than to his companion, "she knows too well so odious an act would also be in vain. The papers would remain, and more certain to be produced to the light in the hands of strangers! She is no fool; it would be a madness! Oh! and if she could be atrocious enough to harbour evil designs against me," the unfortunate wretch concluded, melting into an effusion of natural though womanish tears, "I no longer care for my life! Let her take it!"

"The papers?—what papers? Oh, the letters," said Flamingo, catching at the word. "Wal, they are a good security, if she knew them in proper hands. Leave them in my charge."

"And offend her mortally!" ejaculated Camille, remembering his scolding on the previous day. "Certainly not; some secrets are like gold leaf—to breathe on them is to destroy their lustre and cohesion. I shall leave the key of my apartment with the hostess, who can depend also on the assistance of the apparition. For in my alarm last night I raised an outcry which summoned her to my chamber, and has diffused a salutary awe ever since in the household, and the maid has refused to make my bed unless I remain to protect her all the while!"

"As you will, Frenchy; I only interfered for your benefit, as I have all along," returned Flamingo, very discontentedly, but seemingly oblivious that so short a time previously he had been threatening the young man himself. "However, chalk it up that I meant well, and stand tit for tat. When you see Miss, remind her that she has promised to make things

pleasant between me and old Behringbright, and that I shall turn saucy if she does not do it!—and soon, too. I want to be off from this con-founded place, where it's always raining such a downpour, one's wet to the skin five times a day."

"And so do I," said Camille; "and I promise you if I find I have any influence on my own behalf, I will exert some, dear friend, on yours. But it is doubtless this moist climate which produces upon both of us so profound a sentiment of discouragement," he concluded, with a deep sigh.

"I don't know that I'm much discouraged, either; *my* nerves don't go up and down with my umbrella. What do they charge you here for dinner? and what do they give you for the money?" inquired the American, voraciously.

Camille delivered a tariff of prices, founded on his own somewhat limited experience, in answer to this demand.

"Wal, then, I'll make out my day here. I'll warrant I eat them a rare half-crown's worth meal. But she might have joined me in the invite; she seemed taken with me quite remarkable last night at Prospect Palace. Still I shall do well enough anywhere. I've been on my own hook long enough to take care and hang myself up on a nail that'll bear the weight. Give Miss G. my compliments, and do your best for me, or I must for myself, tell her! And harkee! we'll see this ghost of yours together to-night when you come home, if one's to be seen at all."

Camille smiled, yet rather sadly and absently, as a doomed man well might; completed his note, handed it out to Rooney, with a much-begrudged shilling, called for a can of hot water, and withdrew to his toilette, full two good hours before the expected time for its display could arrive.

CHAPTER XLII.

A MODERN DINNER A LA BORGIA.

FLAMINGO, lounging in a state of torpor over the vast gorge he had taken in for his half-crown, but which he made up to the house by a still more plentiful proportion of liquids, watched Camille taking his departure, a long time after, with some amusement in the contemplation of his costume. The Rue de Rivoli would have been proud of Monsieur Le Tellier undoubtedly; he was finished at all points like a carving in ivory, and might have stepped unchallenged into the dress circle of the most stuck-up opera-house in Europe; which, as we have the best of everything, is of course our own. His handkerchief exhaled a delicate odour; he wore several rings and a handsome chain, which, if they were not of the precious materials they affected, were so artistically fashioned to represent them, that it mattered little to anybody but a pawnbroker what else they were.

Nothing could exceed the elegant finish of his whiskers and hair, and they curled and were very bright with *cosmétique blanc*. Possibly he was even rouged, he had so fine a colour; and his waist was as the waist of a youthful wasp, though I do not assert that the elder members of that order of insect aristocracy develop very aldermanically in advanced existence.

"There you go, as smart as a primrose!" said the American, with a sleepily good-natured nod to the young Frenchman, by way of salute, as he passed. Boa constrictors themselves, it is possible, are good-natured after a high feed at a low figure. But he noticed everything from under his shaggy eyelashes,—the pale lavender kid gloves and all.

"Tarnation fine gal!" he commented, as Camille disappeared. "But rather him than me, under the circumstances; especial-ly after that thar remarkable concatenation of the ghost on the portmant-ô!"

But as for Camille, his good opinion of himself, and livelier spirits, had evidently returned at the toilette glass. He smiled so agreeably, and looked as if even a repetition of his uncomfortable vision of the night before would not have annoyed him so very much if the wraith took care to present itself with an exact repetition also of the elegance of his costume! And no doubt the ruling principle of his mind—personal vanity—was again in the ascendant, and he believed very consolingly in his own irresistibility,—was determined, in fact, to put it to the proof.

The idea was encouraged by all he encountered at Prospect Palace.

He found Madeleine dressed in a feminine adaptation of his own style; gay, coquettish, apparently delighted to receive him—and alone: a circumstance she prettily explained by informing her dear Camille that she had invited him purposely an hour sooner than the real dinner-hour, in order that they might enjoy a little private conversation, and discuss and arrange their future, while her aunt was out at a charitable meeting in town, without interruption from other people's advice and ignorance.

In reality, Madeleine was more at ease in her mind than she had been for some time. She had fairly made it up; was no longer tossed and tumbled on those soul-sickening waves of doubt and irresolution: she knew now precisely what she must do, and was going to do it. Moreover, she had just received a very comforting and strengthening note from Mr. Behringbright, couched in the most affectionate terms, and expressive still of unbounded confidence and devotion. And yet, he stated, he had communicated the last astounding revelation regarding Emily Maughan to Lord Glengariff, with his mother's confirmatory letter,—and was delighted to say that, after a long pause of astonishment, the invalid had seemed to rally in a very extraordinary manner on the intelligence; declared that it explained everything; set at rest all his suspicions of his best friend; relieved him at once and for ever of the delusion of passion he had cherished for so mistaken an ideal of female purity and goodness; which was, in reality, the worst part of his disorder. And he would have

proved the assertion, insisting that he was perfectly able to get up, and would at once—if Dr. Bucktrout had not interfered; and by earnest exhortation prevailed on him to remain in his bed.

But Mr. Behringbright declared his own conviction that the news had produced a most excellent effect towards the restoration of the young Earl from the feverish and half-delirious condition to which it was now probable, anxiety of mind, as much as the suffering caused by his wound, had reduced him. He had spoken on the subject with so much determination and calmness; was so resigned to consider that his mother's journey must and ought to prove entirely bootless; and, finally, at the very hour Mr. Behringbright was writing, had fallen into the first sound, natural slumber he had enjoyed since the accident, and from which Dr. Bucktrout augured the best results if it could be preserved for some continuance unbroken. And so much importance did the physician attach to the operation of this simple restorative of nature, that he directed every one else to retire for the night, and remained himself in watchful attendance on the patient.

This intelligence was reassuring for Madeleine, who was in great dread of the possible impetuous and destructively direct interferences of the young Earl in her devices. She knew they would not bear much straining in any way; and though she had calculated on his remaining disabled by his illness, probably for ever, in the result, still it was good to know that he took the appalling communication in so very sensible and acquiescent a manner. He might have done a great deal of mischief else before he died,—like a fallen war-horse that strikes right and left with his hoofs, in the convulsions of death.

Still, if she had not known she had a grand panacea in store for Camille's worst follies and caprices, Madeleine would not have liked the use her *ex-début* beloved put his opinion to,—that he was fully restored to favour with his lady-love—in the first effusions of their resumed confidence and tenderness.

Camille was, of course, entirely ignorant of the part assigned him in all these tranquillizing and illuminating revelations. But he had come to the conviction that he had allowed himself to be compromised dangerously and foolishly, even in figuring in the affair so far as he himself was aware he did figure. He did not like it, he said, being made to pretend that he was courting another woman than her whom in reality he adored. He must have the whole thing decided upon speedily: the whole nonsensical subterfuge might be discovered at any moment, and then how ridiculous.—*Ciel! how ridiculous!*—he would be made to appear. Indeed, *fraudulent*: he seemed to be trying to advance himself in Behringbright Brothers' favour under false pretences! That would never do—when it was found out. The merchant might even punish him at law: but he would be too much afraid, himself, of ridicule to go back, if once he could be fairly committed to the proper course. And the proper course was for

Mr. Behringbright to admit him—Monsieur Camille Le Tellier—into a junior partnership in his house, which his talents and industry would help to sustain (Behringbright himself was clearly not *so young as he had been*, in anything!), with a share in the profits, in the first place, to the extent of about two thousand a year.

Camille declared that he must be gazetted at once into this position, as a preliminary, in order that he might make sure his dearest Madeleine did not mean to play him any unhandsome trick.

His dearest Madeleine herself seemed not to consider this demand at all out of the way—at all extortionate—at all impossible.

"It is very likely he will do it—all as you require, dear Camille," she remarked, "if only you will give me a little more time. I will try him *to-morrow*. It is *very* likely, he seems so anxious to get Emily quartered on some one! Indeed, I sometimes almost wonder whether there is not some foundation for Lord Glengariff's suspicions of him with her! He was tired of Emily, I suppose, or afraid things would come out, when he shipped her off to Ireland from her poor widowed mother. And, of course, he would do anything to hinder me from finding out how wickedly he has behaved in the transaction."

"*Mon Dieu!* And does he dare to think that this—his cast-off mistress—is a proper wife for Camille Le Tellier? I am obliged to you, Madeleine; you justify all my indignation, and the weapons I employ against them are no longer those of falsehood and treachery, but of a legitimate vengeance!"

"That is what I think; but let us not discuss the point. I assure you, meanwhile, that I will comply as early as possible with the demands of your impatience. *To-morrow*, I repeat! I shall not see Mr. Behringbright, to urge the subject upon him, till then; but it is plain he is completely devoid of suspicion of you with regard to me, which is the greatest point—since he himself desired me to invite you to dinner, in his absence, and ascertain precisely what you required as the conditions of your acquiescing in his scheme of providing for Emily. You have stated them to me now, and it is enough."

"No more confirmation is needed for a conjecture which so dishonours me, since you say Behringbright authorizes my visit here!" Camille responded, looking tremendously indignant, but secretly flattered with the conviction of the great and commanding position he occupied in the affairs of the millionaire. It seemed to him, poor deluded creature, that he was already fingering his two thousand a year as junior partner in the firm of Behringbright Brothers, and completing the confusion and defeat of his purse-proud, domineering rival, by eloping with his bride elect! They might try to buy him out of the firm, then, it is true; but they could not manage to get rid of him otherwise.

Madeleine need not have been much afraid of the process, but she did not like to see Monsieur Le Tellier think. Yet she started herself from a

deep meditation, when she remarked it, which had only lasted a few seconds—but had dived into so deep an abyss of criminal resolve, that she apologized for being so long silent, when she spoke, imagining a much greater interval had elapsed. And thereupon she fell to rallying her lover playfully on the strange manner they were spending their time together; and Camille, piqued on his gallantry, set to work to produce his choicest artificial flowers of love-making; such as French Corydons have handed down to one another to wreath their crooks withal, with very little change or variety, from the earliest age of classicism. “*Comme Vénus belle—comme Minerve elle est sage!*” being the tune to which all their chimes are set.

The dinner was even considerably later than Madeleine had announced, and yet Mrs. Bucktrout did not seem to be aware she had at all exceeded the time assigned when they sat down to the repast at seven instead of five. Time was to be got over, somehow or other. The dinner was a very good one, and consisted of several courses; so that assisted admirably. Then there was the dessert, which, with a flow of excellent wine and conversation, could be protracted almost to any extent.

Moreover, Madeleine exerted herself amazingly to keep up the ball. Camille had hardly ever before seen her so light, so brilliant, so playful—so much like a *Parisienn*e, in short—in her demeanour towards him. They generally prated romance at each other in their interviews, and neither of them had a particle of the real stuff in them. He was in proportion charmed and fascinated; pleased and proud also to think that she was applying all these newly discovered powers to his satisfaction and enthrallment. For there had been many heavy moments of late, when all Camille's vanity could not assure him that he still remained supreme with the wealthy merchant's daughter.

Not but what there were some few intervals during which all Madeleine's efforts to command her attention could not hinder her from sinking into pauses of forgetfulness and absence of mind so complete, that, I believe, on more than one occasion she looked at Camille fixedly for several minutes without seeing him at all. But that invaluable development of his organ of self-esteem persuaded him she was taking an admiring survey of his person and embellishments; and the strange vacancy in such intentness of consideration did not strike him alarmingly. On his own part, he had all a Frenchman's love of chatter, and he was particularly anxious to produce a magnificent impression, in this first friendly and sociable intercourse with which he had ever been favoured with a member of the family circle of his beloved. As for Mrs. Bucktrout, she listened much as a frog in a well might to the chirruping of the birds in the woods above it. But if she did not make, she did not mar, satisfied that so consummate a genius for management as her niece must be conducting all this airy and unmeaning palaver to some very suitable and tangible result.

At last Madeleine said to herself, “It is ten o'clock; it will take

him half an hour to walk home; by eleven Olympe will have succeeded, or never, and the tea will give her an additional three-quarters. Shall we have tea now, aunt?" she concluded, aloud.

"Yes, my dear, if you wish. Mr. Le Tellier has not done anything at the fruit or decanters for a long time."

"I will ring then, aunt;" but Camille had already leaped to the bell with polite velocity, and jingled it. Rooney, the waiter, responded.

"Tea and coffee, please. Monsieur Le Tellier prefers coffee,—and so, I think, do I, aunt, this afternoon," said Miss Graham, quite calmly.

The messenger of destiny disappeared to the kitchen.

"You, my dear? Why, you know how bilious coffee always makes you, Madeleine."

"Sometimes—yes; so it does. But you *do* prefer coffee, Camille?" the latter said, with a sweet smile at her French lover, and a fascinating forgetfulness of the presence in which they were, implied in the use of that familiar form of address.

I think the strongest argument against the likelihood of supernatural interpositions lies in their almost invariable uselessness. How came it that Camille never for a moment reminded himself of that vision of the wraith, with a cup of some loathsome beverage at its lips, and of a remarkable allusion made in a recent interview to his partiality to coffee? He did not; he certainly was very fond of coffee.

Tea and coffee and biscuits were brought; there was plenty of lump sugar in a silver basin on the tray; that was good for *tea*. But Madeleine, very well knowing that powdered sugar was the proper thing for coffee, got up, when the waiter left the room, and brought out a handsome Bohemian cut-glass basin from a small gilt sideboard cupboard, where the occupants of the private sitting chamber could lock up any little stores they did not desire to return to common property at the bar below.

"Aunt and I are very fond of sugar," she remarked, smilingly; "you should see how we sometimes cover the puddings they send us up, till the plate looks as if there had been a snowstorm on it. We are quite obliged to buy in extra stores for mere shame's sake."

Mrs. Bucktrout looked surprised, but made no observation. When a great leader once acquires a reputation for generalship, it is scarcely possible for him to choose a battle or bivouac ground amiss, in the opinion of his soldiery. Madeleine, indeed, grew a little pale herself as she said this, but for the briefest possible moment of weakness.

"And I shall have coffee too, aunt, this evening; it will not harm me for once,—for the sake of the sweetening, chiefly," she said, with an affectionate smile at Camille, who took it as a complimentary sharing of his own tastes, and smiled and bowed.

"Do you prefer powdered or loaf sugar, Mr. Le Tellier?" inquired Madeleine, after helping her aunt to some tea. She knew very well what he would say.

"Powdered, if you please, Miss Graham."

And powdered sugar he had, a good allowance of it; and very finely pounded, and smooth, and white the sugar was. In spite of her avowed preference for the same, however, Madeleine helped herself to lump sugar; though she made no ostentatious display of the substitution; on the contrary, helped herself when Monsieur Le Tellier's attention was accidentally called off by her remarking on the beautiful effect of the rising moon on the waters of the lake below their windows. She said it was quite like a scene in a theatre, and that interested the French observer of nature.

The coffee was very nice; it was delicious. Miss Graham had especially urged upon the hotel people the necessity of having some very nice coffee made ready for the foreign gentleman who was to dine with them that day. Monsieur Le Tellier had two cups, and would probably have taken a third if Miss Graham had not looked at her watch at the moment. She then gave a significant glance at her lover. Camille understood it, and complied with the silent admonition conveyed; and the rather that he did not feel so very well after that last cup; and knowing what an unwonted variety of food he had partaken of, and that his digestion was rather of the weakest, he arose to take his leave.

He would have been glad, perhaps, if Madeleine could have afforded him the pleasure of a few parting private words, but she either could not, or did not think it expedient to attempt. She shook hands with him in her aunt's presence; but she emphatically, almost convulsively, returned the slight lover's pressure he ventured to bestow on hers, and responded in a very sweet tone, and decidedly as if she meant it,—

"Bonne nuit, cher Camille, au revoir demain."

It was quite right and fitting that Madeleine should make that last affectionate farewell and promise of soon meeting again in French. French is not exactly the language of sincerity; and people not born in France, who mean what they say, had better say it in their mother tongues.

Camille gave one of his thrilling parting looks at Miss Graham—one of those looks which he always fancied to be irresistible. She did not meet his tender gaze; but he saw that, with the exception of two burning blotches on her cheeks, Miss Graham was so deadly pale that he had every reason to think she was much afflicted at the necessity of parting from him. He blamed the aunt for whatever besides seemed cold in the farewell, and, persuaded that his walk home to his quarters would do him good, finally took his departure, very well satisfied, on the whole, with his visit.

Madeleine seemed as if relieved from the spell of some dreadful supernatural presence when the guest retired. She gave such a sigh of exhaustion and weariness as the door closed, that her aunt herself, who was wearied to death of the affair, was a little scandalized at it.

"He is, however, dreadfully tedious with his chatter, chatter, chatter."

I am so glad, dear, that you have given up altogether thinking about such a fellow. But did you make all the arrangements right about him and Emily?" Mrs. Bucktrout inquired.

"Yes, aunt; quite right."

"Then hadn't you better go to bed, dear? I am sure you look fagged out," said the kind relative.

"No, aunt, no; I don't feel sleepy. I feel quite cold and feverish," replied the niece; and, indeed, she shuddered violently. "Still I think I'll put things by (that's our sugar, you know; I bought it for our own use, it looked so nice in the grocer's window in Killarney, and the hotel stuff I am sure has had black-beetles in it), and then, yes, we'll go to bed. I'll sleep with you to-night; I was frightened last night at sleeping alone, the wind made such a horrid sighing and moaning about the house; it did indeed sound like the screeching of the banshee they talk so much of here."

The young lady arose and removed the basin of pounded sugar as if to consign it to the private lock-up; but, with most unusual awkwardness for her, let it fall on the fender, where it broke into pieces.

"Dear me! but it's no use now. Lend me the fire-shovel, aunt, and I'll put it all on the fire."

"Why, my dear?" said Mrs. Bucktrout, who was a person of very saving and also very charitable habits. "It will do yet, properly sifted; at least for servants or the poor."

"It sha'n't. For shame of you, aunt! I would not offer it to a pig," said Madeleine, seizing the instrument she required with almost rude violence, past her aunt, and shovelling the fragments of the basin and its contents alike on the fire, which, equally against Mrs. Bucktrout's economical notions, she had caused to be kindled for the reception of their foreign visitor, native of a sunnier clime.

Madeleine continued strangely peevish and contrary for a good long time afterwards; but still complaining of being cold, would not leave the fire and go to bed until her aunt remarked that the people in the hotel would begin to think it queer. She started up at once then, and professed her willingness to retire; but not, as she had previously wished, to share her relative's couch. She felt, she said, that she should be so restless and uncomfortable, her aunt would not have a moment's sleep. Her aunt was quite right—that coffee had disagreed with her, and would make her feverish all night. Oh that it was morning! That next day, in fact, was over! But when Mrs. Bucktrout asked her why, she only laughed, and said, "It was nothing; she was only talking nonsense; only wishing that the time was come for Lady Glengarriff to send word how she sped on her mad journey." Then, snatching up a bed-candle, she hurriedly bade her aunt Good night, and left the apartment for her own; so abruptly, that Mrs. Bucktrout was cut half short in a solemn nocturnal benediction she usually bestowed upon her niece, ever since it was certain

she was to enter on the duties and responsibilities of the married life with a millionaire.

Neither will I undertake to say that Madeleine felt much more composed and soothed when she reached the privacy of her own chamber. The reflections which accompanied her there were not altogether of the pleasantest.

She had discharged her duty to SOCIETY now, indeed—she had followed the maxims of an enlightened self-interest to their uttermost consequences—she had preferred MONEY to EVERYTHING!—To all the pleasing memories of a first passionate though guilty attachment—to the yearning sentiment of preference never extinguished in a woman's heart towards that first object of its mightiest impulse—to every sentiment, indeed, of pity, mercy, hospitality; had ventured all—life itself,—had incurred the most dreadful penalties of the laws alike of God and man—in homage to the golden Moloch in whose worship she had been reared. And yet Madeleine Graham was not content with herself—could not rest comfortably even on the conviction that she had provided against every possible danger of a discovery.

Who would concern themselves about the fate of an obscure stranger, at a miserable little inn, surrounded by ignorant people, if he was assailed on the sudden by a disorder to which Camille Le Tellier knew himself to be subject, and died of it?

If Olympe had employed her time as dexterously and resolutely as was to be expected from her cleverness, her excited hopes of recompense, her hatred of the victim, not a trace would remain to point to any one as having any possible motive or interest to do harm to this obscure stranger: much less to destroy him.

All would be well—must be well—should be well! Madeleine would be able soon, without fear or hesitation, to accept the splendid destiny in reserve for her!

But was it so splendid a destiny, after all?

A million of money, it is true! But—to be shared with Mr. Behring-bright?

And asking herself this question, Madeleine Graham—amazing contradiction in what was still a human nature! miraculous proof of the supremacy of the fiend worshipped by our age!—knew and felt that she had consigned to a death of enormous suffering a man she loved, in order that she might marry a man she disliked, for his riches!

It was too late now to repent—too late! But a horrible grief and terror, on a sudden, invaded her heart; and Madeleine almost shrieked aloud as she cast herself on her couch, exclaiming, “And I have committed a murder, and am in danger of the gallows, to make myself miserable for life!”

Still, however, it was of self chiefly, we see, that she thought, and all the rest was a matter of mere instinctive emotion: for any moral sense at

work in the matter, Madeleine Graham might as well have been a serpent that had bitten a man's heel, and lay coiled again in the jungle, in dread of his revengeful trample.

It must have been so; for the only consolatory thought that occurred to her was, the magnificence of the *trousseau* with which she should be enabled to astonish all Belfast, when she was married to the millionaire!

CHAPTER XLIII.

RIVALEY UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

MEANWHILE Camille, proceeding on his solitary walk to his inn, did not find that it did him all the good he expected. He felt a curious qualminess and heart-burning.

Something, no doubt, had disagreed with him at his dinner. Things often did. Or was it the dinner altogether? He was not accustomed to such sumptuous feeding, certainly; yet it was all so nice. Could it be the broccoli sprouts? No; they were very good, thoroughly cooked, yet of a fine lively green; were only unhealthy when boiled frosty, and then they always looked yellow. The salmon cutlets? Oh, no; nothing could be fresher than the fish was. That delicious coffee, besides, ought to have settled everything. No; it must be one of his old bilious attacks; possibly to be debited to that fiery hot "whiskey" he took the night before. What nonsense to think so! A little "whiskey" might do him good: he had best make home sharp to his inn, and try.

Moreover, the recollection of the stories he had heard about wraiths and banshees—of the dreadful proof he fancied himself to have received of the existence of the former ghastly phantoms—naturally hurried the Frenchman's steps in traversing his lonely road. The exceeding brightness of the moonlight comforted him but little. He knew he had to pass along the skirts of a dark wood to reach his quarters at the "Red Herring." The illumination of the open road would only throw those leafy recesses into deeper shadow. It was certainly getting on to midnight, also. He had stopped strangely late, Camille acknowledged to himself, at a dinner with two ladies. But then the lovely Madeleine seemed to wish it, and had never exhibited herself more truly charming and irresistible—had never before appeared more completely under his own charm and influence.

This idea soothed Camille, and almost made him forget he had a pain in his stomach that was growing singularly in uneasiness and sharpness. He tried to forget it, and to assure himself he was not in the least alarmed, by humming an opera air as he proceeded. The midnight birds, awakened in Kenmare Woods by the sound, turned their heads from side to side in wonderment, not understanding Italian much more than most other insular audiences, to hear the warbling demand,—

*"Crudel, perché finora
 Parmi lan . . . n . . . n . . . guir così!"*

But other creatures than birds seemed to have their attention excited by the melody. Another creature, at all events. Turning the corner of the road from the wood, which led by a bypath to the little tributary streamlet on which the "Red Herring" stood, Camille became suddenly aware that a tall figure of a man wrapped in a long cloak, and with a hat slouched down to his eyes, stood directly in the midst of the way along which he must pass.

The immovability of this figure, its unusual height, the blackness of its vesture, cast into strong relief in the brightness of the moonlight, struck a not unreasonable alarm into Camille. But prepossessed with superstitious terrors as his imagination was, he could not for more than a moment alarm himself with the notion that he was coming upon his own phantom again. The figure was so much taller than himself, its dark and massive style of costume so little like a Frenchman's.

What could it be, then?

It was possible—likely enough—that it might be his long, gaunt American friend, Flamingo Brown, come out to spy for his return. On that supposition, Camille hastened his steps again, and as the figure did not move at all, rapidly gained upon it.

"He is standing in that motionless way on purpose to frighten me. He will be surprised to see how coolly I take it, and I shall rehabilitate myself in his esteem as a person of courage!" thought poor Monsieur Le Tellier, resuming his warbling, and striving to forget an increase of internal suffering in the occupation of his mind. He could scarcely help, however, shrieking aloud when, approaching almost close to the figure, in this *nonchalant* style, it raised its head, and he perceived a countenance which he had only seen once before, but had never forgotten. To be sure, it was on a kind of occasion men do not easily forget; and this recognition, in conjunction with the paleness of the countenance and phosphor-like glow of the eyes, induced Camille to exclaim in horror, "*Mon Dieu!* what do I behold? It is the Earl of Glengariff's WRATH! Holy Mary! for what reason does it present itself, then, before me?—Speak, terrific portent! What does your presence mean?"

And Le Tellier betook himself to a wild rhapsody of prayers and devinities he had possibly not had recourse to since he left his mother's knee.

A very human utterance, however—hoarse with passion, and yet quite as plainly vibrating with contempt—interrupted him.

"Peace, foolish wretch!" it exclaimed; rather uncivilly, perhaps, "I am no spectre,—I am the man whose likeness you discern. And I have been waiting hours for you here, if you are the person whom I take you to be—a Frenchman—Camille Le Tellier by name."

"My name is Camille Le Tellier, sir, and I am a Frenchman," returned the party described, recovering from one alarm only to plunge into another.

"But what is the reason, *milord*, that you address me in these accents of scorn and rebuke? I could not demand of you satisfaction for your insult to me in Belfast, for I understood you were all but dying in your bed, in a sumptuous castle, which has the honour to call you master!—For what reason can she have told me this falsehood also?" he concluded, in astonishment, as to himself.

"I have heard news that would have roused me from my grave, villain!" returned the stern hero of the Belfast theatrical row, continuing in the same uncompromising style. "I was surrounded by an atmosphere of falsehood and perjuries on my sick couch, which I am determined to pierce, and to trust to my own eyes only. Tell me, then, is it true you are here in Killarney, to ask the hand of Emily Maughan in marriage of her guardian? That you *have* asked it, and that he has accepted you as her husband?"

Camille Le Tellier had been informed by Madeleine, in hopes to stimulate him to rivalry against the young nobleman, who had also treated him with considerable indignity—of Glengariff's partiality in this direction. And now it seemed to him a justifiable mortification he inflicted; and, besides, the questioner's tone seemed not to admit of equivocation—when he replied, "All this is as you state it, my lord; but to what utility?"

"Answer my questions, and I will afterwards answer you yours, sir," the resurrectionized chieftain answered, in accents tremulous with suppressed, but not for that reason less formidable passion. "Answer me again without hesitation. You are, then, the betrayer of the innocence—the seducer—of this unhappy young girl?—Gracious heavens! the father of an unborn heir of shame and guilt, which will also call Emily Maughan mother?"

Camille was astonished in his turn at this accusation; and the terrible tone in which it was made, the implacable gleam of the eyes, made him feel happy that he was enabled to reply, with all the fervour of truth and innocence,—

"No, my lord; this latter is altogether a visionary imputation. I know nothing of what you speak now. I am almost a stranger personally to Miss Maughan, and have only expressed to Mr. Behringbright my own inclination to become her husband—not her acquiescence and consent to become my wife."

"Then, basest of all the base!" returned the Earl, or his phantom, in very unphantom-like accents. "it is as I have all along suspected. You have accepted a bribe to wed dishonour; and it is the infamously betrayed and cast-off mistress of a wealthy villain, whose desires have wandered to another, that you accept as your wife!"

Camille felt justly indignant at this supposition; and not a little pleased too, from the tone of its utterance, that he could repudiate it with still more emphasis.

"All this is still more unfounded, my lord, and you owe me an apology for the shameful imputation. The very supposition outrages me—and Mr. Behringbright, who, I assure you, I consider, upon my honour, totally incapable of the part you assign him in this drama, and which occurs to me as very little in his line of assumption. But I do not feel quite well to-night, and to submit to be catechized by a stranger is not altogether so pleasant that—"

"It is impossible for me to understand anything, then, in the affair!" interrupted the Earl, in an amazed and baffled tone. "And true it is my mother assures me it is Miss Graham who has revealed the weakness and misfortune of her friend! Could *she* be induced so to abet and shelter Behringbright? Why not? To secure the rich prize to herself, and be rid of a dangerous rival! If my mother's clairvoyance is not a delusion of her disorder, *she* is capable of anything mercenary and vile. But be it how it may, this scoundrelly coxcomb proposes to make Emily Maughan his victim—or has already done so, in one form or other. And he owes me a satisfaction which I will have, Monsieur Le Tellier!" he concluded, in tones that made the other start.

"Well, sir, but speak quickly. I wish to be at home. I am ill—very ill—I tell you!"

"I believe I am speaking to a man who has some pretensions to the rank of a gentleman—a person who knows his weapons—a professed duellist, since you challenged Mr. Behringbright formerly on a very slight provocation. I conceive myself to be injured in a personal respect by the style of your addresses to a young lady who has been the object of my own devoted—I mean, who has been my *sister's* *governess*—and I demand of you the satisfaction a man of honour is always willing to pay in such cases!" returned Lord Glengariff, flaming out regularly into fury.

"I, sir! I, *milord*! I have more need of a physician, I believe, at this moment, than to answer you. But I repeat, you have no quarrel against me—nor has any man—in anything that regards Miss Emily Maughan. Let me pass, I beseech you!" returned Camille, and in unmistakable accents of agony.

"Do you add cowardice to the rest of your villany? I tell you, I insist, Monsieur Le Tellier, that you shall name a second, to whom I can send a gentleman on my part the first thing in the morning. And I will not leave this neighbourhood until I have extorted the real truth from your lips, or perish myself in the attempt!"

"Assist me, or I shall fall dead at your feet!" was the only reply to this oburgation; and Camille indeed staggered forward as if he had received some stifling blow in the chest, panting for breath.

"The fellow looks ghastly pale, in truth! Can fear do this, or can he be drunk?" Lord Glengariff exclaimed to himself, catching Camille by the shoulder, and steadying him, as he nearly reeled to the ground.

"No, I am not drunk—I am dying. Get me some help, in heaven's name! I feel as if I was poisoned."

"You do not seem well, it is certain," replied Lord Glengariff, struck with the words. "But who would think it worth while to poison you? Come! I require of you only a slight satisfaction for my mind. Make to me the confession of your principal's villany, and I release you from all further consequences. It is on his head only I will visit the chastisement! Confess that you are hired to cover Behringbright's treacherous cruelty by marrying the unhappy victim, and I have nothing farther to say to you."

"Were they my dying words—and I almost think they are, I suffer so cruel an anguish—I have nothing to blame myself with respect to Miss Emily Maughan," groaned the unfortunate Camille; "unless I may be supposed to have injured her by my unauthorized demand of her hand."

"Unauthorized!"

"Quite—quite—quite! But she will be guilty of my death, I verily believe, if you detain me longer!"

"Mr. Behringbright then put it into your head to make the offer, as I have before said?"

"No, indeed—no, indeed! Mr. Behringbright was extremely surprised. So was I myself! I feel now I was cajoled into making the proposition; but I never meant it! I feel like a dying man; but at all events I speak with the sincerity of one!"

"You proposed for Miss Maughan, and you did not mean it! Impudent coxcomb! this is too audacious!" roared Lord Glengariff. "But that unfortunate young lady is not so destitute of friends as you and your treacherous suborner no doubt imagine. I will compel you both to do her justice! I will cane *you* into begging her pardon on your knees—and I will compel the infamous Behringbright to marry her, or throttle him!"

"I beg it already, if I have offended her in a manner to require it, *milord*,—though, let me tell you, far handsomer and richer women have been proud to—to—to—But permit me, meanwhile, to die in my bed! I feel as if attacked by Asiatic cholera; I am, I fear! Are you aware whether it has appeared on these unhealthy lakes?"

Camille uttered a cry of pain as he said these words; and, indeed, the symptoms he now presented were in several respects not unlike those of the terrible disorder announced. Heaven knows whether it did not often get the credit of other destruction with as little cause. He looked lividly pale in the moonlight, and his features were racked with an expression of the severest agony. Lord Glengariff glared down at him, and perceived there was no counterfeiting in the matter. "Why, what ails you, man?" he exclaimed.

"I do not know, but I shall be better, I think, if I had a glass of *eau-de-vie*. I lodge at the little tavern hereby; if you would only deign to escort me there, for I am almost blind, and so giddy! I am a thousand

times worse than seasick! For Heaven's sake,—in the name of that common humanity I ought not to invoke in vain,—support me; or I shall die where I stand! I will explain all I know, if you will but befriend me to some place where I can lie down and have medical aid!”

Lord Glengariff, in fact, was obliged to stretch his arms to hinder Camille from writhing downward to his feet; and appalled and amazed with the exhibition of severe physical suffering he witnessed, the impetuous challenger suddenly found himself converted into the guide and support of his stricken foe!

CHAPTER XLIV.

A GRAND SCENA ON A SMALL THEATRE.

THE Earl was very far from strong himself; for although—as the reader must now conjecture—his injury had been enormously exaggerated, he had really been wounded by the stag, and had lost a good deal of blood. But he managed to escort the reeling Frenchman, the short distance that remained to be traversed to the “Red Herring” tavern.

There, however, a new surprise awaited Camille, which for a few moments stunned his sense of physical suffering. Flamingo Brown met them at the door; and, at first imagining that Mopsieur Le Tellier had been brought home something the worse for liquor, exclaimed, “Won’t you get it neither, my boy? Out at a *lady’s* party, and come home muddled, and your wife up-stairs waiting for you, and has been there hours,—almost ever since you started!”

“*My wife!*” exclaimed Camille, in the words but not in the tones of heart-broken love and lamentation of the self-bereaved Othello, “*I have no wife!* Will the perplexities of this night never cease? Dear friend, do you also add your mockery to so many disastrous events?”

“Then I was right, as I thought, all along,” returned the shrewd Yankee. “And you’ll think now at last I *have* played a genuine friend’s part in the transaction! You had not, as I have said, been gone an hour to your dinner-party when a foreign lady arrived here, with a couple of handboxes, announcing herself to be your wife, whom you were expecting every moment, she said,—A French dressmaker, or milliner, or *modiste*, she called herself, I believe, whatever that meant. I soon pricked my ears when I heard such a saying as that, you may believe, Frenchy, taking the interest I do in you; and I heard her say that you would be back directly, she knew—and order dinner for two. All that went down like buttermilk, and she sent her boxes up to your room, and asked the good people here to light a fire there, and said she would wait for dinner till you came back.

“*Dinner* was the rock she split on; for that’s what gave me the first convictions she wasn’t what she pretended; for it was plain she knew

nothing about your movements, nor where you were, nor when you were likely to return. But the good folks of the house took all for gospel, and would have gone on doing so; and if I hadn't slipped up silently and locked the door on her, perhaps she'd a-robbed you, and got off quietly with the plunder; for she's been a-knocking these two hours to get out; and I went and peeped through the keyhole, and saw she had a biggish bundle made up for carrying off with her, strapped in a pair of old garters. So I pitched a story to the people here that—yes—you had a wife, but she was a very wicked woman,—always robbing you when she could get the chance,—and that you had offered a reward of *thirty shillings* for any one who could catch her at it; and—and—what's the matter with him, Mr. What's-your-name? He seems an ugly sight more than drunk."

"Oh, my letters!—my letters! Take me up-stairs; and, if it is as I think . . . she—she—she has *poisoned* me too!" gasped Camille.

"It was thinking of the letters made me so determined she should not stir a stump. But perhaps she has burned them, now I remember the fire. Can't outdo the women, try what one can!" exclaimed Flamingo, staring rather blankly. But supernaturally revived by the dread of the enormous loss in question, Camille staggered away before his two friends, as they might now be called, up-stairs to his apartment. The landlord, his wife, and some other inmates, who had been impatiently awaiting the solution of the mystery which had now puzzled them for hours, precipitately followed.

Camille unlocked the door, the key of which Mr. Brown had long retained, in spite of every species of expostulation; having found it, according to the custom of Irish keys in general, on the outside of the door, when his restless curiosity had prompted him to "consider the ways" of the alleged wife of Camille Le Tellier.

This latter gentleman was also—as he had the best right—the first to enter the apartment; and it would have been a *coup de théâtre* worthy of Parisian approbation, and consequently of British appropriation, to have seen the meeting of the ghastly, poisoned man, when rushing in he found himself standing face to face with Olympe Loriôt!

The unfortunate lover of Madeleine Graham perceived at a glance what her slighted rival had been at. His leather trunk was cut into two divisions. Olympe had a parcel wrapped in an old shawl in her hand,—a parcel of the fatal letters—for seals, and the envelopes of such documents, appeared at two of the openings. The correspondence was so numerous, it overflowed the measure.

"Olympe!—Traitor!—It is then you!" exclaimed Camille, making a clutch at his securities.

Olympe instantly assumed the only style in which she could discern any hope of safety, or at least excuse,—the heroic wronged.

"Yes, Camille!" she exclaimed, "I am here! The injured woman which you are so well aware you have sought in marriage,—whose consent

you have obtained. But, suspecting you but too justly of a perfidious intrigue with another woman—with Miss MADELEINE GRAHAM—I venture something—I venture all—to ascertain the truth. And I *have* ascertained it! I have employed these hours of my inhuman detention to examine your correspondence with this YOUNG LADY, as, doubtless, you are still prepared to style her; and I unhesitatingly pronounce that it convicts you both of being the worst of men and women. Let who will examine the proofs, this shawl is mine."

So saying, Mademoiselle Lorient tore open her burden, and flung the heap in a scatter, as it fell at the feet of her invaders.

The truth is, Olympe perceived there was no longer a possibility of executing her own plan of eloping with these documents; and she had not destroyed them, because she wished no kind of good fortune to Madeleine Graham which would place that slippery fish out of control; but, above all, the time she had devoted—having nothing else to amuse her imprisonment—to the perusal of these letters had fairly maddened her with jealousy.

With jealousy, and another almost as potent a feeling; for a part of the correspondence contained the most exasperating and insulting reflections on Mademoiselle Lorient herself, on the part of her young friend, who had applied the keenest sarcasm to the depreciation of her person, intellect, by-gones, future, objects, and obstacles, in the power of imagination to conceive.

"Seize her! She is a robber!—and I am dying!" exclaimed Camille, sinking into a chair, after the position of affairs had been thus irresistibly obtruded on his cognizance.

"Dying!" exclaimed Olympe, in her turn staring at her former lover, with an expression of horror and dismay. "Dying! And I was to secure these papers while you dined with her! Dying, and you have but just returned from a dinner with her! Dying, and she purchased *arsenic* yesterday! Camille, Camille, we are both her victims! You *are* poisoned, and I—I—I——But I survive for vengeance!"

Camille had fainted as the excited Frenchwoman uttered her denunciation.

"Wal, now, I'll stake my chance of the next presidency, it's all as the old griffin puts it!" said Flamingo Brown. "I'll be sworn Miss Graham has put him something cooling in his soup; she's the very gal!"

"Send for a surgeon! But at this hour of night, so remote from assistance as we are, the man will die before we can obtain medical advice!" exclaimed Lord Glengariff.

But precisely at this instant—as if it had been so ordained—two persons additional entered upon the scene. And these two persons were Mr. Behringbright and Dr. Bucktrout!

"Cruel, young man! whither have you gone? What do you purpose here?" exclaimed Mr. Behringbright, staring for specific information to Lord Glengariff, from the singular grouping of the scene before him.

"Pardon! pardon! Since all is known, I will confess all!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Loriôt, in a real frenzy of terror on this arrival, which she imagined to be part of a designed complete discovery. "I am, at all events, in no way culpable in this act of atrocious assassination! *She* induced me indeed to become the accomplice of her guilt so far as to promise to endeavour to secure these papers—which confess all the infamy of her relations with Camille Le Tellier, in order that she might be enabled to proceed without detection in entrapping you into a deplorable marriage once more, Mr. Behringbright!—whilst she entertained her unfortunate paramour at dinner. But little did I know—little did I dream—that ~~murder~~ was included in this programme, and that poison was for ever to remove from the earth a presence which accused her—a man whom she had once pretended to love so passionately, as these letters declare—in order that she might marry Plutus—unhappy richest of men!—in your person."

"What does this woman rave?" exclaimed Mr. Behringbright, though he was scarcely able to articulate. "Poison! assassination! It was a mad duel we apprehended,—the dread of which, after you had stolen away from your bed, Glengariff, terrified Dr. Bucktrout into knocking me up, and making to me a statement of the extraordinary artifice you have practised.—To what purpose?"

"I have not harmed the man. Whatever has been done to him has been done by somebody else, Mr. Behringbright," replied Lord Glengariff, sulkily enough. "But if you ask my object, I tell you it was simply to ascertain the truth of your relations with Emily Maughan. Amidst so many entanglements, I saw but one way—to bring you together face to face in my presence, and under my direct observation. I know that Emily Maughan—whatever her misfortunes may be—is incapable of falsehood. But I have not laid a finger on this Frenchman, and if anything ails him, it is the work—"

"Yes, yes; of *Madeleine Graham*! Of Madeleine Graham alone! I am poisoned! I am dying! Have mercy on my soul, dear friends, and get me a doctor."

"Here is one!" exclaimed Lord Glengariff, horror-stricken at this denunciation. "Doctor, administer some antidote."

"But for what?—for what? This is raving. What is this talk about my niece and poison? Nothing ails this young man. It is impossible," said Dr. Bucktrout, in the utmost confusion and perplexity.

"Administer an antidote for arsenic, I repeat, and save my beloved Camille!" shrieked Olympe now. "Save, oh, save him. I can prove the shop where she purchased the fatal drug! Save him, or I denounce you all as accomplices in the assassination! I can explain the motives of the deed! I can; I will! They strew the ground here! Mr. Behringbright, do you know this ring? It was to be redeemed at the price of a thousand pounds, when I had secured these letters of Madeleine Graham's

to Camille Le Tellier. Insensate! she knew all along who you were—that you were the rich Behringbright. She knew so from the disastrous night of the Théâtre St. Jacques; and it was rather she who instigated me to that *dérèglement*, in the hope to entrap you; allured by the reputation of your vast wealth, and the insults you offered society in overwhelming its contemplation with a caricature of our sex in the person of the miserable Incognita. Yes; whatever she may have pretended to you since, Madeleine Graham's heart has always been at the devotion of this young man, whom she has, nevertheless, infamously assassinated to secure your riches. Read these letters, if you do not believe me; and if you would learn to despise and hate her! And if you cannot reconcile to yourself why, in recompence for the barbarous treatment and expelling to which you subjected me, by the agency of the police, at the Sparx *Gynécée*, I have endeavoured to secure you a wife who seems so much to your mind—know that it was always my purpose to make you the most miserable of men by divulging what Madeleine Graham in reality is, when it should be irrevocably too late to repair your error!”

Mr. Behringbright must have looked the horror and astonishment that shook his soul to its foundations, in no light a degree; for even Flamingo Brown—a fellow as impervious to impressions as the armour-plates of a Monitor—who loved him not, and was at first tempted to feel diverted at the *exposé*—turned pale, and caught him by the arm. “Take care, sir; you seem ill!” he exclaimed.

“Do not attend to me! Save, if you can, this yet less miserable victim! Doctor, save this man; and save your niece from the gallows!”

“You shall not! you shall not!” shrieked Olympe. “I go with this step to denounce the whole conspiracy to justice! Expect its officers among you in a few minutes,—and owe at last to the unhappy and betrayed Olympe, Camille! your rescue from a gang of murderers.”

So saying, Mademoiselle Olympe, eluding Flamingo's effort to detain her—with the dexterity to be expected from so experienced a member of the *corps de ballet*,—swept past him, and rushed down-stairs into the open road at a velocity which forbade all hope of overtaking her, if even anybody's mind had been definitely made up to that purpose. But Dr. Bucktrout, Mr. Behringbright, and Lord Glengariff were now surrounding the unhappy patient.

“Somebody *has* poisoned the young man; that is certain, at all events. Most likely this d—d Frenchwoman herself; particularly if there is any truth in the statement that she is his wife!” said Dr. Bucktrout, after a short pause of consideration, finding no better could be said or done. “Landlord, bring some hot water and mustard!”

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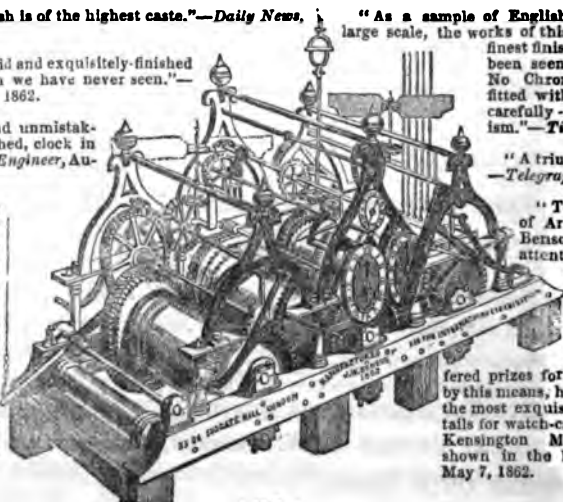
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THE MAN IN CHAINS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SACKVILLE CHASE."

CHAPTER I.

GRAY'S INN AND ITS NEW MEMBER.

GRAY'S INN LANE is not in appearance suggestive of hedgerows and wild flowers, the creeping convolvulus or the prickly briar. It is wretched and miserable in winter, it is like an oven in the summer. It can never put forth a green leaf, even if it had any trees along its course, which it has not; and it is not probable that it will be ever anything else than what it is,—a leading thoroughfare, narrow, squalid, and dirty. On each side are the dusty and dilapidated remnants of a past age—an age which succeeded that in which, before Gray's Inn Lane became a street, a sylvan nook, a real country green lane existed, running through verdant fields, redolent in the spring-time of the perfume of the cowslip, and shining in the freshness of a brilliant verdure. But that, of course, was long before the vast metropolis of the British empire began, like some huge reptile, to stretch its feelers out, and to remorselessly devour the country all around it.

But although Gray's Inn Lane is not only not attractive, but is actually repulsive—although its houses on either side seem to threaten each other with a gloomy defiance, which is strangely blended with a kind of drowsy indifference as to whether they should fall together into the thoroughfare, and so block it up, and thus be each self-destroying in their neighbourly hatred; or gradually, by torpid and almost imperceptible advances, form an intimate junction with their frowning roofs, and thus completely shut out the light of heaven, which now but struggles to find an entrance there,—although such be the existing condition of Gray's Inn Lane, yet may we, by the simple exertion of making but a few strides, effect a change around

us as effectual as that which a wizard might have produced when wizards were in the plenitude of their power, and roamed about this earth seeking whom they might transform,—a change as marked and striking, and as pleasing, as that which is effected by the aid of the ubiquitous harlequin at Christmas-time; a change from the debased reality of the back slum of a great city, to a glorious picture fresh from nature's fairest scenes.

As we walk down Gray's Inn Lane, with its frowning grimness on either side—more frowning, more grim, more repulsive on one side than the other,—we might, by the agency of a transforming wand in the shape of some stout pickaxe, break through into a sylvan scene, where flowers flourish, where the grass grows thickly and luxuriantly green, and where great trees stretch out their giant arms as glorifying the heavens above them, even as though they were high towering above some rural glade where smoke and dust and noxious vapours have not penetrated.

Yes, spite of its evil fumes and reeking kennels, its pent-up fever haunts, its filth, its misery, the degradation of its cabined toilers, there are green spots in the very midst of this great London, which prove that heaven had blessed the spot before the hand of man defaced the scene, and that still the blessing lingers even above the place where the spirit of miasma reigns.

A dingy room, up three flights of ancient stairs, scantily furnished, the walls wainscoted and bare, looks out upon the tops of the tall trees that flourish in Gray's Inn Square. This room has been but recently tenanted by its present occupant, a young man of three-and-twenty, who is a barrister-at-law of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, by whom he has just been called to that distinction. It is a summer evening, and the two windows of the chamber are open, and through them comes a strange admixture of incongruous sounds. The roar of that mighty stream that rolls for ever up and down High Holborn is heard above the rest, like the beating of the breaking surf upon the sea-shore when equinoctial gales are prevalent, and ships go down at sea. It is a roar that is unlike that upon the sea-shore in this respect, that while the sea is sometimes calm, the tide that simultaneously flows both ways in the great gulf-streams that run from east to west of London is unceasing, and for ever thundering. Its roar comes in at the open windows of the room in Gray's Inn Square, and it is blended with the prattle of light-hearted children, who are gambolling beneath the great trees that make the spot anomalous, and shrill cries are heard from neighbouring offshoots of the mighty stream; and if we listen at the window now on this calm summer evening, distinct from the rolling roar, the merry laughter, and the shrill cries, we hear, like the faint echo of a fairy's revelry, the soothing hum of the plodding bee; for on the next window sill are flowers trained, flowers that are rich in sweet aroma which has attracted—whence?—that solitary bee, whose hum makes the whole scene a strange anomaly indeed.

We have to commence our story in the room that looks out upon the

tops of the great trees that are in Gray's Inn Square, for the occupant thereof is to be our hero. It is he who is to be our MAN IN CHAINS—those chains that no man can ever see, but which are clanking in every thoroughfare and in every crowd; clanking with a sound that none can hear, although it can be felt; clanking in the senate, on the judgment-seat, amidst the scenes of revelry and mirth, beneath the surplice of the high ecclesiastic and the coronet of the great patrician; clanking amidst the jingle of tinselled fashion;—everywhere clanking with a sound that none can hear, and yet which vibrates to the very heart, and sometimes blights it.

Our representative MAN IN CHAINS is Silvester Langdale. He is, as we have already said, twenty-three years of age; he has just been called to the bar; he is utterly without patronage; he knows nobody in London; and his stock of money is almost as limited as the circle of his friends. He has resources within himself, which, however, can scarcely be said to be all within himself, because they are not wholly dependent upon himself. If they were, he might with truth aver that he was rich in resources. The gem in "the dark unfathomed caves of ocean" is of as much intrinsic worth as when it shines upon the bosom of an empress, for its light and glory are unchanged and unchangeable. We can see that light and glory when the jewel shines upon the imperial breast, but we do not know of its existence even, when the green waves roll over it and hide it from mortal eyes.

So in the ocean of society. Down in its dark unfathomed caves are gems of thought within the human mind, and which extraneous circumstances have shut out from the surrounding intellect of all the world. Such gems had Silvester Langdale discovered in his own mind before he had ventured into London. He had passed them through the alembic of his brain, and they had issued brilliantly, but they were not shining upon the world as yet.

Silvester Langdale had been for some years an usher in a school in which he had previously been a pupil. It was in a quaint old city that is historically renowned in close connection with England's greatness from the earliest times. Its cathedral is one of the grand memorials of an ancient day, when poetry would seem to have been blended with material architecture, and when the genius of the few shone like a solitary star amid the dark ignorance of the many.

The city in which Silvester Langdale had passed his youth contained one of those noble monuments of the forgotten past. In regal troubles that city had been conspicuous, and it has the bones of kings enshrined within its sanctuary. Lingered in its byways, in quaint preservation, are houses in which subject citizens of Queen Elizabeth were born, lived, and died; and the strangely fashioned roofs of those old edifices suggest with silent eloquence strange historical scenes that have often been enacted in the streets below. Old men and women who were born in the quaint old city,

and who have never left it, although the potent scatterer—the creation of modern days—has carried its magic wheels in all directions from the old city, still hand down traditions that they received from their grandsires, of how, in Cromwell's time, the streets ran red with blood when the great fight occurred; and they will point out where the exact spot is in which the fugitive Charles made his last stand, and commenced his last flight; and so, from age to age, imagination doubtless has embellished facts which sound like romance now.

The school in which Silvester Langdale had passed his youth was situated in one of the bye-streets in the old city,—the oldest street in that old city,—and it was in the oldest house in that ancient street. And that old house was in itself an archæological curiosity. It was surmounted by a great roof of black timber, with heavy eaves deep enough to shelter big artillery, if it could be placed there, and having at each end a great towering gable. But the roof was not the only portion of the house that was overhanging, for every story overhung the one beneath it, so that the big old house completely overshadowed the narrow street. Across each story, stretching the whole length of the house, was a range of windows diamond-paned, and above them in the walls were massive black beams standing vertically in the white plaster of which the walls were composed. Nor was the interior of the house less quaint and striking. The chief entrance was at the side, a massive black, frowning gateway, with two ponderous wooden doors, like the portals of a cathedral, in one of which was a smaller door which was used as the entrance to the house, for the great doors of the vast gateway entrance were never opened. The door leading into the house itself had a great porch with stone seats on each side, and there was a knocker on the door that looked more like a huge hammer than anything else, and which, when used, made the old house reverberate with ghostly echoes. The grand staircase inside the house is something wonderful to look upon. It extends nearly the whole depth of the house, and is wide enough for a company of soldiers to march up the shallow stairs, six abreast. Indeed, amongst the traditions of the old place is one concerning a troop of Royalists who did once flock up those great stairs and down again, just before the royal Charles took his way through the eastern gate of the city, and was no more a king. The great schoolroom was panelled with ancient oak, and about that old room there was a charm for every student in it, for therein the mighty Cromwell once held a council, and dictated orders that for a time extinguished Royalty in all these realms.

Such was the establishment in which Silvester Langdale had passed his youth. As a child he had been sent to the school, but the principal of the school never knew whence the boy came, or with whom he was connected. A mysterious person had left the child in his care, and the necessary *honorarium* was agreed upon; the stipend for a year or two was regularly kept up, and then it suddenly ceased. But the old pedagogue had come

to love the boy,—the old man had married in his youth, but his wife and child were snatched away from him years and years ago,—and he had adopted Silvester Langdale as his own son, and he had carefully trained that child to manhood; and that little old man—he is very short and very round, and his face is very plump, and he has a glorious double chin, and his venerable old head is entirely bald—is with Silvester Langdale in the poorly furnished room that looks out upon the tops of the great trees that are in Gray's Inn Square.

There was no consanguinity between that venerable man and Silvester Langdale, and yet, from the scene that is taking place, one might fancy that the nearest ties of blood bound them indissolubly together. The old man has fallen upon Langdale's breast, and is weeping like a child.

"It is the first time," he says, "that we have been separated. Henceforth the course of our two lives must be asunder. May yours, my boy, be onwards towards a brilliant future."

"And your own?" inquired the young man, the big tears glistening in his eyes as he spoke;—they would have their way, and so they coursed rapidly down his cheeks.

"And mine!" cried the old man; "what matters it of mine? My course is nearly run."

"You will always let me call the old house my home?" said Silvester Langdale, taking his friend's hand in both his own.

The schoolmaster could only press Langdale to his heart, but the action was more eloquent than words.

It was that afternoon that Silvester Langdale had for the first time been made acquainted with the history of his childhood. His old guardian and instructor, whom he had looked upon hitherto as a father, had informed him that evening what their actual relative positions were, and Silvester Langdale had in that revelation been almost overwhelmed with a feeling somewhat akin to that a person might experience in the loss of a fond and attached parent. And yet Silvester had always known that Nicholas Darvill, the old schoolmaster in whose house he had lived, was not his father; but until the evening of which we speak he had never known what their actual connection was. Silvester Langdale had always spoken of and addressed the old man as Mr. Darvill simply. It is true that in the ancient city—for scandal is always rife in ancient cities—there were those who sometimes talked of old Mr. Darvill and his pupil usher, and they would smile as they did so, and make disparaging allusions, and remark that it was no uncommon thing for rackets young fellows, who had been wild in their youth—not to say reprobates and unprincipled deceivers, when they were young,—to turn out, as they advanced in life, sedate and steady citizens, and estimable characters. It was true that nobody could remember even any suspicions of years long passed away against old Nicholas Darvill, but then the captious scandalmongers would argue amongst themselves that folk did not trouble to remember current scandals of half a

century ago; and after such deprecatory inuendoes they would invariably come to the conclusion, that whatever had been the errors of his youth—thus assuming that they had been conclusively proved,—Nicholas Darvill had been an estimable citizen, a strictly moral character, and an inoffensive neighbour.

Nicholas Darvill had always been proud of his *protégé*, and he had watched his expanding abilities as they had developed themselves, with a satisfaction which filled his heart and soul. When Silvester first expressed a desire to follow the legal profession, Nicholas Darvill had warmly supported the choice; albeit he did so with many misgivings, seeing that the bar, as he knew, was a profession that is near akin in its nature to a lottery. There are brilliant prizes in its magic wheel, and there are many of them; but how many hundreds of aspirants are there who sink before their prime into hopeless oblivion, without ever having had the opportunity of even trying one chance in the magic wheel, or one grasp at fortune through its agency! All this did Nicholas Darvill feel and know, and once he ventured to hint his doubts and fears to Silvester, but the young man was so ardent, and so hopeful, and so enthusiastic about the bright future that his imagination drew, that the old man joyfully allowed those pleasing hopes to have their fullest play,—not the less so, perhaps, that he himself felt that he was gradually becoming their willing slave too.

And so the means were saved by Silvester Langdale's own exertions—oh, how proudly did old Nicholas Darvill proclaim that fact to all who might be interested in the declaration!—for him to become a member of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, and in due course his "call" had taken place, and it was to see him installed in his new profession—it was well that both the old man and young one were very sanguine in their hopes—that Nicholas Darvill had come up to London.

"My boy, the time is almost at hand when I must take my course back to my solitary home in the old house," says the old man, with a very palpable nervous affection about the region of the throat.

Silvester Langdale presses the old man's hand again, and turns to prepare himself to accompany him to the railway-station not far off. Nicholas Darvill knows that this is the intention of the young barrister, and he hastily exclaims,—

"No, no, Silvester, you shall not accompany me. I can and will go alone."

Silvester Langdale is about to offer some emphatic remonstrance, but the old man continues,—

"I am determined to go alone, Silvester. Indulge an old man's whim," and the tears come into his eyes as he speaks. "I am a poor old man, weak and foolish, perhaps;" and he tried to speak cheerily, but the effort only partially succeeded. "I would rather go alone, and for this reason, Silvester,—if I leave you in this room I shall remember the separation all the more vividly. I could not bear to see you on the railway platform,

amongst a crowd, as the train carried me off into the darkness of the night and the solitude of my own thoughts. Farewell, my boy. Yield me this little boon, and let me leave you now. God bless you, and may His blessing and fortune smile upon you."

And the old man was gone, leaving Silvester Langdale standing in the centre of the chamber as one that was partially stupefied. He had yielded to the old man's desire, but his loving guardian had scarcely quitted the room when a sudden impulse seized upon the young man. He would follow Nicholas Darvill unobserved to the railway-station, and watch him to the last. Acting upon this impulse, he snatched up his hat, and had opened the door to proceed down the staircase, when he was met by a fair-haired, handsome boy of about fourteen, who was the bearer of a note addressed to Silvester Langdale, Esq., Barrister-at-Law. It was written upon coarse and soiled paper, but in the corner Silvester recognized a well-known autograph. He hastily read the contents of the note, which were brief, for a trembling hand had scrawled the following,—

"I have but just ascertained where you are to be found, and there may be time yet. You have never witnessed a death-bed scene; it will be some relief to my closing anguish if you will come and witness mine. I am upon my death-bed. Privation has done its worst, and I see my pauper's grave yawning by my side. For Heaven's sake, come to me before I sink. I am conscious that these are the last lines my hand will ever trace. For God's sake, come to me, and relieve the anguish of one who signs himself truly,

"MISERRIMUS."

The autograph, as we have said, was on the superscription of the note, and Silvester Langdale told the bearer of the letter that he would follow him immediately.

He did so.

CHAPTER II.

MISERRIMUS.

SILVESTER LANGDALE intimated to the fair-haired messenger that he would at once accompany him to the abode of the writer of the note that he had just delivered, and he followed the boy down the stairs into the public thoroughfare in front of Gray's Inn Buildings. It was now deepening twilight, but Silvester Langdale had a better opportunity of observing the appearance of the boy than when he was on the darkened landing outside the chamber in Gray's Inn. He was a bright, fresh-coloured, intelligent-looking boy, with fair curly locks and bright blue eyes, and he spoke with a remarkably pleasing voice. The general character of his attire was altogether out of keeping with his fair, round face; for while his flowing hair had evidently been well tended, and his face was clean, his clothes were ragged and patched, and they looked as though they were much

soiled, although in reality such was not the case; but they had been so much brushed, that all the vestiges of anything like nap had been worn off the cloth of which his jacket was composed, and so it looked brown and dusty, although its original hue had been black. His trousers were patched at the bottom of the legs with pieces which formed a very bad match to the original material; and his boots were fearfully down at heel; indeed, they might be truthfully described as being out at heel, even as his scanty jacket was out at elbows. On his head he wore a covering which had once been a cap, but which now, from its limpness, looked much like a loose black bag that had been discarded by some gatherer of trifles. It was that cap which seemed to complete the general ragged appearance of the boy; and the cap alone, to say nothing of his poor boots, would have been sufficient to have insured him a bad character in any part of the great world of London. Spite, however, of his ragged appearance—spite of the unmistakable poverty in which he must have lived and was then living, there was something in his countenance which strongly attracted Silvester Langdale.

In another minute they were in Holborn, and the boy said they had not far to go; they would soon be there, where Miserrimus—he did not use that word, but—where his uncle was ill and dying.

“How long has he been ill?” Silvester Langdale inquired.

“Ever since he came to mother’s, sir,” answered the boy; “that is three months ago.”

“Has he been attended by any medical man?”

“The doctor of the parish has been two or three times, and said my uncle must have nourishing things; but how can we get nourishing things for him, sir?” the boy inquired, piteously. “It is as much as mother can do to send me to school.”

“Oh, she sends you to school, does she?” said Silvester Langdale, in a tone that seemed to be one of relief to him; indeed, he felt an undefinable satisfaction in the discovery that the boy did go to school.

“But I’ve learnt a good deal more from uncle than I have at school,” continued the boy. “Oh, sir, doesn’t he know a lot?”

“Yes, he is very accomplished,” said Silvester Langdale, in an abstracted tone.

“I think there’s nothing he doesn’t know, sir.”

“What has he been teaching you?” Silvester inquired.

“Why, I haven’t had time to learn much from him, because three months isn’t long, sir, is it? And then when uncle was taken so very ill, he could only talk lessons to me, and not teach me with books. He’s told me all about mathematics, and Roman history, and the history of Greece; and when he first came he taught me to fence and to draw, but that was only on a slate, because we couldn’t get any pencils and books; for we can’t buy anything but something to eat, sir, and not always that.”

The boy spoke earnestly and sorrowfully.

"Many a time have I woke up in the middle of the night, and seen mother a-crying, and I know what it's for."

"Have you a father?" inquired Silvester Langdale.

"Oh yes, but he finds it very hard to get any work since he lost his last fight."

"Lost his last fight!" exclaimed Silvester Langdale, in a tone of astonishment.

"Yes, sir; he used to be a fighter by profession, and then take benefits; but he can get nothing to do now any way. After his last fight he tried a walking match, but because he sprained his ankle, the people said he'd sold them; but I know that he never did, and he would do any work, I am sure, that he could get to do."

By this time they had reached a narrow, miserable alley leading out of Farringdon Street, a thoroughfare which was thick with stifling vapour in the summer-time,—thick and hot, a strange admixture that made the skin feel clammy, and induced incipient nausea in those who were unacclimatized to the locality,—and the boy stopped at the door of a miserable-looking house, about halfway up this small artery of the great metropolis, and said that was his "home."

Poverty—abject, crushing, demoralizing, hideous poverty—had set its seal even upon the very threshold. The staircase of the wretched house was close to the door,—so close, that you might step from the narrow pavement of the street at once upon it.

"Please to follow me, sir," said the boy; and he led the way up the winding, narrow staircase, which was in utter darkness half a dozen steps up. So dark was it, and Langdale so frequently stumbled, that the boy said, "Will you please to take my hand, sir? I know all the stairs well enough;" and Silvester Langdale did so.

There was a faint glimmer of a thick, heavy light when they came to the first landing, and Langdale felt a kind of relief when he had reached the spot, for the staircase was evidently of such a peculiar construction, that a false step must inevitably precipitate an uninitiated stranger to the very bottom, without a chance of saving himself. It was with anything but gratification, therefore, that he received from his youthful guide the intimation that they had yet another flight of stairs to mount precisely similar to those up which he had with so much difficulty ascended. By the same process, and with the same difficulty, he succeeded in reaching the second landing, and the boy noiselessly opened a room door, and thus presented a scene to the eyes of Silvester Langdale which instantly stamped itself upon his mind, never to be effaced therefrom. There was a dim yellow light in the room, proceeding from an attenuated candle that was inserted in an old iron candlestick, that might have been reclaimed from a dust-heap, but which, nevertheless, was clean withal. In the light that proceeded therefrom, Silvester Langdale was enabled to see a wretched bed upon the floor, upon which was lying a human form that Langdale

instinctively felt, rather than saw with his eyes, was almost as fleshless as a skeleton in a charnel-house. The wretched bedclothes were evidently so thin that the outline of the person who was sleeping in the bed was painfully traceable and terribly suggestive. There was no furniture in the room save an old chair and a large dilapidated trunk, which was made to serve the purpose alternately of a washstand, a table, and a desk. On the chair a woman was seated, watching the sleeper upon the wretched bed. The moment the door opened, she rose and put her finger to her lips; and when she saw Silvester Langdale, she bowed to him with a natural grace that really almost seemed like a mockery in that dismal room. This was the thought of Silvester Langdale as the woman advanced noiselessly towards him.

"Mr. Langdale, I presume," she said, in a whisper. "He has been talking of you, sir, the whole day, and I fear me that what he has said is really prophetic." And the woman wept bitterly.

"What has he said?" inquired Silvester.

"He says he has but to see you, and to die in the misery that he has inherited; but in peace," she replied. "Oh, my poor lost brother of a miserable sister."

"You are his sister, then," said Langdale; "I never knew he had any relations until this boy spoke of him to-night as his uncle."

The sleeper moved upon the bed; the involuntary effort was evidently painful, for he groaned. Langdale went to the side of the bed, and seated himself on the box, and waited in silence for the sleeper to awake, the woman resuming her seat in the chair on the opposite side. He looked round the miserable room, and observed it more attentively than he had been able to do when he first entered. "And has it come to this?" he mused; "a brilliant intellect, so highly cultivated, too, to find a home at last like this. Oh God, the contemplation seems to scorch my brain!" And he put his hand up to his forehead as he thought this; and musing still amidst that awful wretchedness that was so palpably around him, he remembered those happy days of his youth when the miserable creature who was now lying upon that wretched bed, was a thoughtless, gay, and brilliant man—reckless, it is true—careless of his great mental acquirements, and ambitious only for the applause of pothouse companions, and recking not of what the future might produce. He was the idol of the school-boys whom he taught in Nicholas Darvill's school. They caught up readily the instruction that he was so well able to impart, and his tuition was no drudgery to them. If he had been endowed with energy and with ambition, an intellect such as his, stored as it was with most precious gifts, might have carried him to a splendid eminence, glorious to himself and beneficial to the world. But his ambition, as we have said, was limited to the miserable sphere of a small pothouse, and he gradually clouded his great intellect in those fumes that leave their blight upon the mind. To him it was facile to gather the treasures of ancient and modern literature, for

Greece and Rome and Germany had no arcana amongst their intellectual treasures that he could not with ease explore. And yet he wasted such great gifts as these upon the narrow intellects of those whose temple is a public-house, and whose best enjoyment is a drinking bout. He was content with the celebrity which such a circle could give, and with the material pleasures which tobacco and malt beverages could yield. With these twin agents would he cloud his brain until he verged upon lunacy, and became indifferent to all around. In consideration of his great intellect and wide acquirements, Nicholas Darvill had tolerated his usher's self-neglect, and something worse, until his patrons became loud and menacing in their remonstrances; and so reluctantly, after repeated efforts to produce a salutary change in his course of life, the old man was at length compelled, with his eyes clouded by tears that welled up from his generous heart, to send the man who has just so truly signed himself "Miserrimus" out upon that world of which he knew but little and cared for less. From that moment Silvester Langdale had heard nothing of his instructor, save that he had made his way to London, and had there been lost as it were in its overwhelming vortex. It is not surprising, then, that the young man should feel something like anguish as he looks down upon the wretched bed beside which he is sitting; it is no matter for wonder that his heart should beat against his breast convulsively as he sees the wasted form upon the bed turn slowly round towards him, and gaze upon him with eyes that seem to glisten from a dead man's skull. Those eyes have recognized their visitor, for a feeble voice—so feeble that its utterance sounds like the hoarse echo of a sigh—cries,—

"Langdale, this is kind."

And Silvester Langdale is made conscious that an attenuated hand is held out towards him. He takes it in his own, and as he does so, a manifest shudder runs through his frame, for it is like a grasp from the fingers of a skeleton.

"Stoop down to me, Langdale."

Silvester did so.

"My sand is almost run out—you would not have known me—say that you would not have known me."

Silvester Langdale could with truth, indeed, have declared that he would not have known his former tutor. How should he, indeed?—that sunken cheek, so hollow that the jaws stood out prominently; the mouth covered with matted hair; the forehead wrinkled with deep furrows that privation had carved out; the whole face, indeed, suggestive rather of that dread change that comes on after death and in the grave, than of that once beaming face that, when he knew it in his youth, was ever lighted up with the joyousness which is characteristic of the heart that takes no heed of what the morrow may produce. Know him! oh, how should he have known him beneath such a change?

"Langdale," said the dying man, clutching at Silvester's hand, "I

shall soon be gone, and shall have died by slow degrees. You recollect how we used to read of the refined cruelty that was practised in the Middle Ages, and how ingenuity was tasked to find out means of slow, but sure and lingering death. I have been suffering that torture. My soul has ebbed away, and I have known no consolation. Langdale, for two long months I have been without tobacco."

The declaration had a strange jarring effect upon the mind of the young man. There was an admixture of the ludicrous and the solemn, the grotesque and the awful, in the whispered avowal of the man who, there could be no doubt, was dying then.

"They have sent me from the parish medical advice; but it is too late: the doctor has ordered me port wine, and Abel has gone out with the order upon the overseer to get it. Port wine!" and a faint smile broke upon the lips of the wretched man. "Port wine! for me, when what I have needed has been porter and tobacco."

Strange infatuation! strong, even in death.

"What can I do for you?" faintly inquired Silvester Langdale.

"Nothing, my good friend—my old pupil." And as he said this, he again seized the hand of Silvester with his own bony fingers. "Nothing, unless you will smoke a pipe with me."

Silvester Langdale beckoned to the woman on the other side of the bed, and, in a whisper, asked her if the medical man resided in the neighbourhood.

"In the next street only," she answered. Langdale took a card from his case, and hastily writing with a pencil thereon, directed the woman at once to proceed to the doctor, and give him that card. Taking the boy with her, she instantly proceeded on her errand.

"Bless you! bless you!" sighed the dying man. "I knew I might depend upon you for solace."

Langdale felt a creeping horror come over him. What if the man should die while his relations should be away? The thought caused him to break into a profuse perspiration.

"My sister is a good soul," said Nicholas Darvill's usher, "yet she married a pugilist; but Abel is a decent fellow notwithstanding. We have all been starving; they are starving now, but they have never complained of the burden that I have been to them. Abel is a good fellow, although he is a prize-fighter and a professional pedestrian. I have been with him to the flash-houses, and we have picked up money together there, but the hand of misfortune has been heavy upon us both. But I have taught their boy as once I taught you, and he has been apt as you were. And he too has worked.—Stoop down nearer to me," he said, as his voice seemed to become weaker. "He too has worked, and we have both been upon the stage,—ay, the stage!" he repeated, as he observed the expression of surprise that was upon Langdale's countenance. "That boy has been our chief support of late. He is a chorister boy, and has a wonderful voice."

"But yourself—how were you upon the stage?" inquired Silvester Langdale.

"I became a dramatist," and the decrepit man would have laughed at the declaration, but his strength would not permit the ebullition.

"A dramatist!" echoed Langdale.

"Ay, a veritable dramatist."

"Not in your own name, then, or I should have recognized it," suggested Silvester.

"No; I was Mortimer Montmorency."

For an instant the old laughing expression which Silvester Langdale remembered so well lighted up and animated the eyes that had looked so fearful when he first beheld them on that wretched bed. But the expression was less than momentary; it was gone even on the instant that it was perceptible to Langdale.

"Yes, I wrote a play in five acts," feebly continued the almost exhausted man. "The boy was engaged at one of the theatres to take part in a chorus, and I went with him of an evening, and so became acquainted with the manager. Oh, Langdale," continued the shadow on the bed, after a pause, during which he had closed his eyes from sheer exhaustion—"oh, Langdale, you can have no idea of the solace that play was to me in my poverty and privation. So abject was my poverty—but why need I dwell on that?—*circumspice!*—that I had to beg the paper upon which my drama was written, beg it of the manager whom I had informed of my scheme and plot. He encouraged me, Langdale. Bright dreams of halcyon days floated before my soul. I felt myself sublimed, and when I had placed my drama in the manager's hands, and he had informed me that he would produce it, I thought that my golden dream was out, that I could enter into the garden of the Hesperides. But from that dream I was rudely, crushingly aroused, for listen to me, Langdale; listen to the golden guerdon I received for all my toil, and thought, and fondly cherished hopes."

The flickering energy with which he spoke was too much for him, and he sank back upon his pillow with a groan which seemed to shake his emaciated frame. Silvester Langdale was almost afraid to draw his breath, and it was a grateful relief to him when he saw the skeleton hand again move towards him. He could see that it was seeking his own, and so he put out his own to meet it, and the bony fingers grasped his hand again. Slowly the large eyes reopened, but they were not so bright as they had been when Silvester Langdale first encountered them in that room.

"How dark it is becoming!" said the dying man, scarcely above a faint whisper.

The same light was in the room that there had been previously.

"They gave me *fifty shillings* for my drama in five acts, and then I felt that my soul was crushed—ay, even though the play by 'Mortimer Montmorency, Esq.,' as they styled me in the bills, drew large houses, and

had a lengthened run. We could not live on fame and fifty shillings for three months' labour."

The woman has returned with the doctor, a pompous little man, who would not have attended to the summons which had been sent to him if Silvester Langdale's card had not borne the inscription of "Barrister-at-Law" beneath his name. With the woman, and the doctor, and the boy, came the husband of the woman, the father of the boy. He was a big, burly fellow, athletic and muscular; but his countenance was not repulsive, as is the case with many of his calling, although it was scarred by the traces of conflicts which he had passed through.

"What can be done for this wretched man?" Silvester Langdale inquired of the doctor in a whisper, and pointing to the breathing skeleton on the bed.

"Nothing," replied the doctor; "he is beyond human aid, and has been for days. It has only been a question of time."

The callous way in which the medical adviser of the paupers of that densely peopled district spoke of the dying man sounded like a horror on Silvester Langdale's ears.

"Are you there, Langdale?"

The voice was distinct, but it was so fearful in Langdale's ears that he started back in terror; but instantly recovering himself, he said,—

"Yes, I am here."

"You are not alone. Why has the room been darkened?"

The room had not been darkened.

"A sure sign that dissolution is at hand," whispered the doctor to Silvester Langdale. "All will be over in a few minutes."

"Bring your ear close to my mouth," said the dying man to Silvester. He did so.

"In the box by the bedside is a manuscript. Ask for it."

Silvester beckoned the woman to him, and told her what her brother had said.

"Yes, sir; it is the sketch of a plot that my poor brother intended to work out," and she opened the box, and gave the papers to Langdale.

What awful sound is that which seems to strike into the very hearts of those who are grouped around that bed of misery, destitution, death? It is the fearful summons, the indicating knell, the last dread effort that the animated clay can make before the spirit frees itself from its abode on earth. It sounds like what indeed it is, a summons from beyond the world, a summons from the unseen but not unknown, the final call from the everlasting.

No motion now; no sound from those parting lips, that are powerless to close, and which will never close again by the volition that has hitherto governed them.

Yes, the doctor, the pugilist, the woman, the boy, and Silvester Langdale feel that they are in the chamber of death. No earthly trouble can

again depress the soul of him who once was the gay, light-hearted companion, full of wit and joyousness; but who is now an emaciated corpse.

CHAPTER III.

A CRY OF MURDER IN THE CITY.

THERE is a motley crowd in the space that is in front of the old Guildhall in the City. It is mostly a ragged crowd, and there are many ill-favoured and slatternly women, and a good many children amongst it. The children are mostly female children too, and every one, for the most part, may be counted as a couple, or at all events one and a half, for nearly every female child carries an infant in her arms; and there are burly labouring men with pipes in their mouths, and the majority of those labouring men are Irishmen, whose occupation, when they work, is in the region of the docks, or along the shores of the river. It is a noisy crowd, for the grown-up portions of it are in knots or clusters, who are loud in their vociferations, and demonstrative in their gesticulations. It is a kind of crowd that is frequently seen thronging about the entrances of the metropolitan police courts,—a crowd that seems instinctively to gather on the spot where any startling crime has been committed, and the perpetrator thereof has to be brought up in due course of law to answer thereto. It is a crowd that appears to scent the odour of a great crime from afar, and to gather round its centre as the vultures swarm round carrion. And the feeling that prevails in such a crowd is usually one of mere curiosity, tinged, it may be said, with a morbid sympathy for the criminal, if the crime be specially heinous; and if it be secret murder—murder in which there is fearful mystery, murder surrounded by appalling atrocity—then the crowd is dense indeed, but still composed of the same elements, and drawn from the same sources. It is on the first dawn of the crime, as it were, that this crowd congregates in front of our police offices,—even before the rumour has gone forth—as soon it does—to every quarter of the great City's round, and through all the country too. And so that crowd at every stage of the terrible inquiry goes on accumulating, until it has swollen to a human sea that is hideous to look upon—a sea that surges in its fearful tide in front of that frowning fortress of crime which lies over against St. Sepulchre's; a turbid sea that is all murky with crime and immorality, which flourish with peculiar rankness even in the presence of the dread example that swings like a mockery from the gallows-tree.

The crowd is noisy and vociferating in front of the justice chamber of Guildhall; for in the wretched alleys and the loathsome streets that lie about the City's heart the cry has that morning gone forth of murder. Close under the very spot where murders and assassinations of every grade of turpitude and horror have so frequently been expiated, the cry has been

the loudest ; for almost under the very gallows door—at all events in close proximity to it, so close, that when the gallows is erected, the wretched dwellers in the place can hear the sound of the builder's hammers on the Sunday night—a murder—so the rumour goes—has been that morning committed, and the wretched culprit is in the hands of the police, and is to be brought up before the aldermen—astute and learned on the bench, as that discriminating crowd all know full well.

And as the hour approaches for the commencement of the judicial business of the day, the motley crowd of the morning draws to itself new elements from the surrounding streets; for the cry of murder, even though it be whispered, has a fearful influence.

The two aldermen whose turn it is to-day to take their places on the judgment-seat, and with great acumen administer—for they can do so intuitively, or *ex officio*—that law,—which, in other men, requires the study of a life, in order duly to expound it,—have arrived ; and with them, from the neighbouring council chambers, have flocked others of their body ; for murder is attractive even to an alderman. The doors are thrown open to the public, and there is a rush from the crowd outside ; but only those who are close against the outside door have any chance of gaining admission, for the justice-room is of very limited dimensions, and the portion appropriated to the curiosity of the general public and witnesses is of about the extent of the corridor of a small house.

The great charge of the day is the first upon the list, and as soon as the august representatives of the majesty of the law have taken their seats, it is called on ; and immediately afterwards, as from a trap-door in the centre of the crowd that has been forced into the room, the form of a man is seen to emerge, with two attendant policemen to guard him. He is a big man of six feet high—fully,—broad and muscular in proportion, and is manifestly possessed of more than ordinary physical strength. He has a muscular face, too, and a big, massive forehead, and the general expression of the countenance is that which classic painters and sculptors have handed down to us as the ruling type of the Roman gladiator. As he stands against the iron bar which forms the dock for prisoners in this incongruous chamber of justice, he looks haggard and wild,—an expression that is the more apparent from his shirt being open, and his stalwart neck exposed ; and he grasps the iron bar in front of him with both his hands.

The prisoner was charged with killing and slaying one Ephraim Glasher, in whose house he rented a couple of rooms. The chief witness against the accused was the wife of the deceased, and the nature of the charge having been stated by the inspector of police, who had it at hand, this woman was called from a chamber that appeared to be situated in a dark corner of the justice-room ; and the moment she came into the presence of the prisoner, she burst into a paroxysm of excitement, and was with difficulty withheld from making a dash at the man at the bar. She was a woman of great stature, bony and angular, and with a countenance of a

most forbidding expression. She was between fifty and sixty years of age, but she evidently possessed the vigour of youth still. Her attire was tawdry, but faded, and she had the general appearance of a flaunting gaiety that had lost its brightness, or from which the glaring colours had been subdued by age; the probability being that the several portions of her attire had separately flourished in a different sphere from that in which they now were utilized. The moment this woman made her appearance in the court, she stretched her brawny arms towards the prisoner, and cried at the top of her voice,—

“There stands the villain; there is the murderer of my husband. The villain shall be strung up if there is law in England.”

“You must give your evidence, my good woman, in proper form, and in the usual way,” said the senior alderman, with a profound shake of the head.

“Yes; I’ll give my evidence against the devil, and I should like to tear his heart out!” shouted the woman, and she looked indeed as though she would like to perform that operation.

“You must be sworn in due form,” said the alderman, with a scared look.

“Oh, I’ll be sworn; I’ll kiss the book. Where is it?”

The book was handed to her, and she grasped it eagerly, and exclaimed, “So help me, God,” and then emphatically kissed the book.

The clerk informed her that she must be sworn in the usual form.

“In twenty thousand forms, if you like,” shrieked the woman.

“Please to take off your glove,” said the magistrates’ clerk.

“What for?” demanded the woman, in great excitement.

“Because you must be sworn on the book with your bare hand.”

“With both hands, if you like, and bare-headed too, if that will bring him to the gallows quicker,” shouted the woman, and glaring at the prisoner as he stood in the dock, still grasping the iron bar.

The woman hastily tore off her glove, and, clutching the book again, cried fiercely,—

“Now what am I to do?”

The oath was then administered to the witness in the usual form, and in answer to leading questions, she deposed that the prisoner at the bar had attacked her husband in a most ferocious manner, and with his herculean strength had struck him dead upon the spot. In answer to further questions, she deposed that a dispute had arisen between the prisoner and her husband respecting certain arrears of rent that had accrued; and because the deceased had demanded simply that which had been due to him, the prisoner had fallen upon him, and in his own room had struck him dead.

She was required by the astute clerk to the magistrates to be a little more specific in her statement; and after another ebullition similar to that with which she had favoured the bench on her entrance into the court, she deposed that a relative of the prisoner, a drunken, lazy lie-about, had died

suddenly in one of the apartments of the prisoner; and her husband, finding that he had no other means of securing what was due to him, had recourse to the expedient of seizing a trunk which was in the dead man's room, upon which the prisoner at the bar, who was a well-known pugilist by profession, had taken her husband by the throat, carried him on to the staircase landing, and there, with a death-dealing blow, had struck her husband down the staircase—dead!

The prisoner, according to the usual form, was asked if he had any questions to put to the witness.

"Questions!" cried the woman; "let him look me in the face, if the villain can, and put any questions he likes."

As is very commonly the case in charges similar to this in a police court, when a prisoner is required to put any questions to a witness—that is, cross-examine him or her as the case may be,—the accused man at the bar commenced a rambling statement of his answer to the charge that had been made against him, and he was entering into the whole facts of the case, when he was abruptly checked by the clerk to the magistrates, who informed him that he would have an opportunity of making any answer he had to offer to the charge presently, but until then he must confine himself to any questions he might wish to put to the witness. The prisoner then turned to the witness, and commenced a recital of the incidents of the scene which had led to the catastrophe, which, in fact, was simply the defence in another form, and he was again checked by the magistrates' clerk, with the intimation that he must confine himself to questions to the witness, and reserve his statement for the close of the inquiry. This intimation only confused the prisoner, who could not understand what cross-questioning the witness meant, unless he was allowed at once to give his own version of the entire matter respecting which he was thus charged.

During the whole of the investigation the prisoner might have been observed to cast furtive glances first to one entrance to the court, and then to another, as though he anticipated the advent of somebody who would come to his assistance in the sore strait in which he was placed; but no one appeared to relieve his anxiety.

The magistrate inquired if there were any other witnesses, and a police officer stepped forward, and having been sworn with the distinct exactness and solemnity which characterize the administration of an oath in an English court of justice, he deposed that in going his rounds that morning he was startled by the shrieks of murder that proceeded from a street he mentioned; and on proceeding to the spot, he found a man lying at the foot of the first flight of stairs in the house in question, in a state of insensibility, and he immediately sprang his rattle, which brought to his assistance two brother constables who fortunately happened to be near the locality referred to. Without attending to the insensible man, they promptly ascended the stairs, and found the prisoner at the bar in violent altercation with the last witness, who had made, as it would seem, a fierce onslaught on the accused;

and deeming this sufficient evidence that he had been the aggressor in the affray which had led to the condition of the individual they had stumbled over at the foot of the stairs, they had promptly taken the prisoner into custody, and conveyed him to the station-house, whither he was followed by the last witness, who forthwith charged him with the wilful murder of her husband, upon which they returned to the scene of the affray, and had the body of the deceased conveyed into a room of the house, where it was examined by the divisional surgeon, who at once pronounced that life was extinct.

The prisoner was again asked if he desired to put any questions to the witness, and he intimated to the court that the whole matter was accidental, and that he had expected a gentleman would be there to tell his lordship all about it, as he was a lawyer, and had been sent to. The bench gathered from this intimation that the prisoner expected legal assistance, and asked him if this were so; but before the prisoner could answer the question, a slight commotion was observed at the magistrates' private entrance to the court, and the next moment a gentleman entered; and the instant the prisoner saw him, he cried, "This, your worship, is the gentleman I expected;" and there was an expression of relief upon his countenance as he said so.

The gentleman who had entered the court was a tall man of about fifty years of age, but his appearance did not truly indicate what his real age was. Indeed, he was a remarkable man in this respect, for, as will probably be seen in the course of this history, he seemed to possess the faculty of making himself appear older or younger according to his will. He could look decrepit and bent; he could walk erect and with a firm and determined tread; he could assume a nervous twitching of the hands, as though afflicted with incipient palsy and paralysis; and he could grasp a man's throat with the iron grip of an athlete. He had been known to do so more than once since the time when he could appear to be in age close upon the Psalmist's limit. His hair was thick and dark, and there was no indication of either baldness or change of colour. He had a thick beard and a heavy moustache; but the former was tinged with grey hairs, that appeared strong and bristly amongst the rest, which was of a deep, rich brown. Such was Mr. Marl Baskerville, the legal adviser with whom the prisoner at the bar had communicated. His legal practice was as peculiar as it was extensive, although it was almost exclusively confined to the members of the sporting world. In the turf, the ring, the hunting-field, the army, Mr. Marl Baskerville was as well known as the prime minister—perhaps better,—and he was a conspicuous light in that veiled scene which has been designated life in London. He was of the legal profession, but that was not his exclusive, perhaps not his principal, calling; he had much to do with money matters, and in his office, which was situated in some obscure locality in the west—obscure, and yet, to a large portion of the world of London, as well known as the Haymarket—there were mysterious

iron boxes, respecting which there were many legends; for they were known to enshrine strange documents, brief in themselves, but which it were well to keep hidden closely. With the members of the pugilistic ring and its patrons, Mr. Marl Baskerville was an oracle. He it was who prepared "the articles" that are drawn up for every fight,—drawn up with as much particularity and verbal strictness as though they were treaties in diplomacy, or instruments which the law would recognize, act upon, and, if necessary, enforce. Mr. Marl Baskerville had at once answered to the summons of Abel Barnes, the prisoner at the bar, and he now appeared at the court in his defence.

A few words to the bench explained the position of Marl Baskerville, and then he requested a few minutes' consultation with the accused, which was at once granted, and the prisoner was conveyed into the obscure room that led out of the dark corner of the court. The consultation was but brief, and presently the prisoner was placed at the bar again, and the evidence that had already been taken was read over to Mr. Baskerville, who desired to cross-examine the wife of the deceased, and she cried,—

"Cross-examine? Yes; you may cross-examine me till you're blue in the face, but you sha'n't cross-examine his neck out of the noose;" and she pointed with a frantic gesture to the prisoner at the bar.

Mr. Baskerville asked if the deceased had not threatened the prisoner with a knife, and the woman emphatically denied it. In answer to further questions she said that her husband was the owner of many houses similar to the one in which the prisoner lived, and that they were all let out in rooms, and they never inquired how many people occupied them so long as the rent was paid every three days at the farthest. If it was not paid, the tenants were ejected by force, without the delay which any legal form would necessitate, and whatever they had was seized. Mr. Baskerville then put a question to the woman which roused her fury to the utmost, and she clutched her fingers at her questioner as though she would like to tear him. The question was a very plain one, and such as might, under ordinary circumstances, be easily answered. It was this,—

"Were you really married to the deceased?"

Instead of directly answering the question, she, as we have said, clutched with her fingers at Mr. Baskerville, and her rage glared through her eyes and swelled her throat. She broke out into emphatic vituperation of the prisoner and his advocate, nor was her rage at all calmed by the magistrate inquiring what the question had to do with the investigation that was then being made.

Mr. Baskerville, in a tone of voice that was not audible in the court, told the aldermen that he had merely put the question with an ulterior object. The fact was, he should be able to show that the woman was not married to the deceased, and as she therefore could have no claim upon his property, her virulence towards the prisoner might be accounted for. He then spoke in a louder tone of voice, so that he might be heard over the

whole court, and said that as it was probable that the aldermen would not finally determine upon the case at that hearing, but await the verdict of the coroner's jury, he should content himself by calling one witness only, and that was the prisoner's son ; and he requested the usher of the court to bring in the boy, Severn Barnes by name. The boy, having been produced from the dark room, was placed in the witness-box ; his eyes were red, his face was haggard and pale, and the vibration of his heart could almost be seen through the threadbare and slender covering that was upon his breast. In answer to the questions that were put, he deposed that on the previous night his uncle had died. [And here the poor boy wept bitterly.] That shortly after the death of his uncle, the landlord, who was the deceased Ephraim Glasher, came home in a state of intoxication, and demanded to know if that—using a fearful imprecation in reference to the dead man—had paid his rent, or paid anything in lieu of it ; and on being informed that the man would never pay rent again, for he was dead, he declared, with an oath, that it was a lie ; and he came up the stairs, and was attempting to force his way into the room in which the corpse lay, when the accused intercepted him, and declared that he should not enter the chamber. This would seem to have infuriated the man, and to have confirmed him in his belief that the wretched occupant of the room was not dead ; and drawing a knife from his pocket, he swore that unless the prisoner permitted him to enter the room and satisfy himself, he would stick him. “ You sha’n’t enter to-night,” cried the prisoner ; upon which the landlord made a rush, with the knife in his hand, at the prisoner, who struck out at the deceased with such force that he was knocked down the stairs, and, falling heavily to the bottom, was killed upon the spot.

The policeman was recalled and questioned as to whether he had seen any knife ; and he replied that when the deceased was carried up-stairs, a large clasp-knife was found firmly grasped in his hand.

The crowd outside the court had been informed of the course the inquiry inside was taking, and some of the groups of slatternly women expressed themselves with something like indignation that a case which had promised in the morning to be one of atrocious murder, should be dwarfed into manslaughter at the most. What was the use of stopping to see the prisoner brought out ? he could not be hung for manslaughter. All the interest of the case was gone, and so most of the crowd went too ; and when Abel Barnes was remanded upon the charge against him, there were few to notice how pale he looked, and to feel sympathy with that ragged but good-looking boy who clung to him as he was being removed.

CHAPTER IV.

"THERE IS THAT CREATURE AGAIN, PAPA. LET US GO HOME."

THE London season is at its height, and is in its glory ; indeed, it has been more brilliant than usual, for there have been many adventitious causes conducing thereto. There have been great attractions in the metropolis, that have drawn visitors from all parts of the civilized world, and London has been the centre of gay excitement that has been administered to from every quarter of the globe. And yet gaiety in the public streets, even when that gaiety is exhibited by congregated myriads, does not seem to harmonize with London ; it is not natural to it, it is manifestly out of place. The people know how to enjoy themselves, of course ; they are constantly seeking outdoor pleasures, and finding them after their own fashion, and according to their own tastes ; but the English people, nevertheless, do not understand, or, at all events, do not exhibit, the real spirit of *al fresco* enjoyment. But London is noisy enough in its mirth, and it is excitable enough therein occasionally, and it can get up demonstrations, vast and almost overwhelming in themselves, but which are almost invariably attended with something that is very nearly allied to failure. We should be but a sorry nation if our national character were to be indicated by our public demonstrations. They are always solid and substantial enough, but they are generally bungling, and are only impressive in the dense mass of heterogeneous order by which they are characterized—a kind of order, however, that is anomalously a mass of confusion, from which it is something wonderful that no disaster arises, beyond the crushing to death of some dozen or so of unfortunates who happen to be unluckily thrown down and trampled upon. A general illumination is not a frequent event in London, and one would fancy that, being of rare occurrence, something like versatility of taste would be exhibited in carrying it out when it does take place ; but no, the illumination of this year is precisely the same as the one two years ago, and stars and garters, crowns and olive-branches, are the limits of the nation's taste in this respect.

The gayest scene in all London, in the London season, is without doubt Rotten Row, in Hyde Park ; and it seems distinct from London, although it is a characteristic part of it. If it were possible to analyze the elements that compose that scene in the drama of civilization, how strange, and perhaps we might say how startling, would be the result obtained ! It is not our purpose to attempt such an analysis, seeing that we have no alembic for the purpose ; but the drive in Hyde Park, and the ride in Rotten Row, in the midst of London's season, could supply an almost inexhaustible source of reflection to the meditative philosopher who might choose such a field for his speculations. It is said that the most profound novelist that France has ever produced has manuscripts in his library table that would

fill fifty large volumes, and that he intends to write for ten years more, if he be spared, before he publishes any of them; and the reason that he assigns for this strange literary hoarding is, that he has marked out a certain course for himself in which to develop certain phases of society to a limited extent, and only to a limited extent; because he avers that if he were to fashion out all those materials that a walk along the Boulevards of Paris would supply, he could not do it in a hundred years. What, then, must Rotten Row and the drive in Hyde Park be to the imaginative, and contemplative, and creative mind?

Marl Baskerville is no creative or imaginative philosopher, and yet, as he stands at the entrance to one of the crossings of Rotten Row, waiting for a favourable opportunity to pass over to the other side when an eligible opening shall present itself in the stream of equestrians then surging up and down the avenue, a philosophical reflection does pass through his mind, and he falls into a kind of reverie as he leans against the railings at the side of the road, from which, however, he is presently roused by a voice exclaiming,—

“Hollo, Baskerville; you’re the very man I wanted to see.”

The voice proceeded from a gentleman on horseback, who had reined in his horse the moment he saw Baskerville. He appeared to be a rather tall and spare man as he was seated in the saddle, and he looked between forty and fifty years of age. By his side, on horseback too, was a young lady of probably about eighteen or nineteen, attired in a riding habit, and wearing a cavalier hat which was adorned with a profusion of crimson feathers. She wore gloves which, gauntlet-like, extended nearly to her elbows; and in her hand she carried a riding whip—not a toy, however; not the limp, light switch that young ladies commonly flourish when on horseback, but a large black whip, thick in the handle, and heavily mounted with embossed gold, the top thereof being surmounted by a figure of a race-horse, with a jockey on his back. She exhibited a commanding and most attractive figure on horseback. The body of her riding habit fitted faultlessly, and displayed a beautifully tapering waist, above which swelled out, in rolling voluptuousness, those rounded curves which such an attire is so well calculated to make conspicuous. Her face was exceedingly beautiful, but it exhibited a haughty sternness, which perhaps arrested the attention more forcibly even than its beauty. Her eyes were large, and almost fierce in their brilliancy, their colour being undefined, something between blue and grey; but whatever their colour might be designated, there could be no doubt as to their power to express strong passions, and to flash with every fiery impulse of their owner. Her lips, although they were full and large, had an equal power of expression, when passion called it forth; and her nose was large and prominent, but still in entire harmony with all the other features. Although her countenance in repose was soft and beaming, yet had it an expression of strength which was not masculine, and of linear development

which was not power. It was a face in every way calculated to express either passion or feeling ; such a face as that with which the Goddess of Tragedy might be represented,—with a dash of the voluptuous thrown in to tone down the tragic element a little. Her hair was light, and was gathered in a mass behind her hat, and held in bounds by a silken net. She has reined in her horse as her companion had done on seeing Baskerville, but she does not recognize that personage, for she seems to be intent upon observing the horses of the fashionable equestrians as they pass her. She looks at them critically, with scrutinizing eyes.

“What’s this report that I see in the papers to-day about a murder having been committed in the City by one Abel Barnes, a pugilist?” the gentleman on horseback inquires of Marl Baskerville ; “surely it isn’t our old friend the Bilston ?”

“It is our old friend the Bilston though,” replied Marl Baskerville ; “but it is no case of murder.”

“What was it ?—a mill ?” the gentleman inquired.

“No,” said Baskerville ; “a scrimmage in which, as usual, Barnes was unlucky.”

“D—— me ! it is extraordinary the ill luck of that fellow ; you know I stuck to him till the last ; but Lord ! I couldn’t stand it. And yet I believe the Bilston has got the right stuff in him ; still I was obliged to turn him up. I’ve made stakes for him, I’ve backed him, and I’ve got good matches up for him ; but what’s been the good ? he’s never been able to do anything but get licked. I thought, however, he’d left the country. And what is this case ?—what will it come to ?”

“Well, I suppose they’ll find it manslaughter at the inquest to-morrow, although I don’t believe it amounts to that. He sent for me this morning, and I couldn’t very well abandon the poor devil, so I appeared at the police court for him.”

“What has he been doing lately ?” inquired the gentleman who was on horseback.

“I rather think it has been going very hard with him of late ; in fact, I am sure it has,” said Baskerville. “When luck’s against a man, he hasn’t much chance.”

“That’s true,” responded the gentleman, with something very like a sigh. “Let us get him off if we can. Come to me to-morrow morning about it. I suppose you are going over yonder ?” and he pointed in the direction of the centre of the park, and smiled as he did so.

Baskerville said he was going thither, as he must look after his clients occasionally ; and as he said this he smiled expressively,—a smile that the gentleman he was conversing with seemed very well to understand.

To the uninitiated world it is not known that under the trees in Hyde Park there is a kind of betting exchange held, in which a very motley class of persons assemble daily and speculate upon the current turf events, and in which large sums of money exchange hands and float about. The

turf in England now is not so much a sport as it is a business: it is almost entirely commercial in its character, and the commerce that it has created is conducted upon mathematical principles, which seem, indeed, to be intuitive in those who are proficient in them—for many of these men can scarcely write. Indeed, there are some speculators amongst them who really cannot write, and who employ amanuenses to record transactions which are remarkable for their accuracy and truth of calculation.

It was to this spot in the Park that Baskerville said he was going; a spot which, considering its associations and the people who assemble there, may be truly characterized as one of the mysteries of London.

"You will come to me in the morning then, will you, Baskerville?"

"I will, my lord," said Baskerville, and then he went across the Row upon his way to the spot on which he said his "clients" were assembled; but as Lord Montalban cantered away, the man with whom he had been conversing paused to look after him, and as he did so, the expression of his countenance was entirely changed from that which it exhibited but a few minutes previously. It looked malignant now. Suppressed passion seemed to burst through the eyes that glared beneath those shaggy eyebrows, and Marl Baskerville clenched his hand upon his thick walking-stick with an iron grasp. His lips were firmly compressed together; indeed, he seemed to contract his whole frame, to bind himself around, as it were, with the terrible passion by which he was agitated.

He turned from the spot, and took his way across the enclosure of the Park; and as he did so he mumbled to himself,—“I never forget, and I never forgive.” The muttered exclamation seemed to give him comfort, for he repeated it thrice, and every time with more animation. “The scheme is tedious, because his rank is high; but although it is so hideously slow, yet will it be terribly sure in the end. Yes, it has been working gradually year by year; and such retribution as that which I must work but gains strength with time. Twenty years ago!—when I look back upon the events which that time has produced, it seems an age; but when I look on him, oh God! the interval seems but a night, and yesterday the date of my great wrong. Wrong? Yes, wrong!” He seemed to thrust the word into his heart. “And what has it made me? Well, no matter what; perhaps that has yet to be seen. I never forget, and I never forgive. No, I never forget, even in the vortex of those exciting scenes to which I minister so much. Oh Heaven! how bright and promising was my youth! how glorious the scene of life appeared to me when first it opened to my view! but what a terrible reality has it developed! But I never forget, and I never forgive!” and then he walked hurriedly on, as though by that means he relieved his agitation. “No wonder people fear me as they fawn upon me. They cannot fathom me. No, no; and least of all you, Viscount Montalban!” and he said this with a tone of scorn that was manifestly a relief to him.

By this time he had reached that *Rialto* of the turf upon the

itself, to which we have alluded. Viscount Montalban was a nobleman with but one daughter; he had no other family. His wife had died several years before the period at which we meet with him, and he had not married again, and had probably never entertained any desire to do so. He was, however, connected with many noble families by kindred, and amongst them was a cousin who was a Duke. Viscount Montalban succeeded to a princely fortune, after a long minority, but year by year it had sensibly diminished, and year by year he was becoming less wealthy. The vast amount of available money which he had inherited on coming of age had been a misfortune to him, and he had been frequently heard to declare that, although he had been born rich, he certainly had not been born lucky. From his earliest youth a passion for the turf had inspired him, but his ill fortune in connection with it had become proverbial in the sporting world. He had plunged with a wild recklessness into the vortex of turf pursuits, and he commenced his career by purchasing, at inordinate prices, a stud of great extent; and he would seem to have had a mania for favourites for great races, especially for Derby favourites; and he would purchase them at prices that were actual fortunes in themselves. For one equine quadruped he would pay a sum that would have mounted "the six hundred" that galloped into the yawning jaws of death in the valley of Balaklava; and at the back of that he would heap up sums of gold in the shape of bets that were almost fabulous, and all which might at any moment be irretrievably lost by any one of the ills which equine flesh is heir to, or by the negligence of a stable-keeper. As the viscount grew older, however, he became more prudent; and when all the accumulated revenues of his minority had vanished, he came to the resolution of disposing of all his stud, and contenting himself with being a spectator of and a speculator upon the studs of others. The trustees of his youth had, as though with some misgiving with regard to the course of the young lord when he came of age, invested, under certain powers which had been given them, a portion of the accumulations in the purchase of an estate in one of the mid-land counties; but as though, even in this matter of prudence on his behalf, the ill-luck which had been born with him should be conspicuous, it was discovered, when he came of age, that the title to the estate so purchased had a stain upon it. In reality, however, this was fortunate for him, strange as the fact may appear; for while it was not sufficient, as it would seem, to jeopardize his enjoyment of the property, it precluded him from raising money upon it. That one estate was the sole unencumbered property that he possessed.

Property, as we know the axiom tells us, has its duties as well as its rights: it has its bitters as well as its sweets, too; and property sometimes has more of the bitters than the sweets, though perhaps not often.

Lord Montalban and his daughter are mounted upon two splendid thoroughbreds, and as they are put into a canter on Baskerville taking his

way across the park, the sweeping action of the steeds and the graceful riding of the young lady attract attention from the brilliant throng in Rotten Row.

And Viscount Montalban was justly proud of his daughter's horsemanship. She had been accustomed to riding on horseback from the time she was a little child, and in Lord Montalban's county she was known now as the most fearless and dashing rider across country that county had ever produced. She had made hunting fashionable amongst the ladies of her neighbourhood, but none of them could approach her in her equestrian accomplishment; they all lacked her fearless dash and energy. All save one. During the previous season one fair rival had appeared to contest with her for the triumphs of the hunting-field, armed with every requisite to make the trial. The gentlemen of the hunt were delighted with the advent of the stranger, who was dashing, handsome, impetuous, and—well, utterly unrestrained in her conversation. The all-important question, "Who is she?" was speedily answered, and the majority of the members of the hunt smiled; but Lord Montalban looked grave, as did some few others.

The rival in the hunting-field to Lord Montalban's daughter was known in Rotten Row too, for she resided in London, and had no seat in the country, save that upon her horse, of which she was undoubtedly the accomplished mistress.

Lord Montalban and his fair companion are cantering towards Kensington Gardens, when a brilliant horsewoman, attired exactly like the daughter of Lord Montalban—so exactly like, indeed, that one might have been taken for the other,—dashes by them upon a thoroughbred steed; and as she does so she turns with something like a disdainful movement of her head, and with a supercilious curl upon her pouting lip, and casts a look of recognition at the peer and his daughter, which brings the blood into the young lady's face, as she exclaims to her father,—

"There is that creature again. Let us go home, papa."

They turned round immediately, and cantered towards Park Lane; but before they had reached the extremity of the Park, the equestrienne who had been designated "the creature" dashed past them again, and gave them the same kind of recognition as before.

When Miss Montalban reached home she was very much flushed and excited.

"BIG BEN."

[At mid-day on the 6th of November, the Great Bell of Westminster was heard again, after his long silence.]

"BIG BEN!" "Big Ben!"

He calls again
From his silver-sheeted throat;
Over the town,
Is rolling down
The Cyclopean note.

Come first, great bells
Of quarter knells,
In a lo, la, lo, lu rhyme;
Then clang, clang, clang,
With a mighty bang,
Rings the anvil of Old Time.

From a lofty hall
His voice doth fall,
In a gorgeous blast of sound;
Out miles away,
It goes to lay
Its thunder on the ground.

He not alone,
His giant tone
For waking sense doth keep;
I have heard him come,
With tremulous hum,
Through the dreamland of my sleep.

From his temple rock,
Over the clock,
His cycle words are said;
With a roar that flings
Down the vaults of kings,
And shakes the Minster's dead.

ISCA.

FAIRY-LAND

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

I HAVE been in fairy-land.

Fairy-land is not so far off as I used to think, when, as a boy, I was accustomed to retire far from the haunts of men, and sit in the hayloft all day, with my cat by my side, and the "Arabian Nights" on my knee. *En passant*, when those three dear little volumes were first given to me I flatly declined to read them, being disappointed in my childish conjectures that they told of Arabian knights, and their deeds with sword and spear. Fairy-land is in England. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that it is not *very* far from a railway-station. Perhaps I might state, without any departure from truth, that fairy-land is a trifle less than two hundred miles from our metropolis. Consequently, if we start from London, with the intention of reaching fairy-land, we must direct our steps towards the north star. And I very much doubt whether, if we reached the bright Polaris himself, we should meet with a spot more unlike the ordinary aspect of this work-a-day world,—certainly, with none more charming.

It is not a very large place. Thousands of travellers pass it every day, and never recognize it. You might walk within twenty yards of its boundaries, and not discover that your twenty-first step (if you could take it, but you can't) would land you within a fairy's dominions. I who write have seen and passed it unheedingly, never to do so again, never to forget the enchanted scene within, where a fairy's hand works wonders, and a potent magician directs her efforts.

Not long ago the magician in question waved his wand—a porcupine quill tipped with steel—and inscribed a charm, which drew me by its all-powerful influence from my suburban study, and delivered me over to a fiery, snorting familiar, who straightway carried me to an enchanted lake. First he sank with me through the earth; then he swept me over a wide expanse of meadow-land, and across many a winding river; then he hurled me high in air, and only loosened his grasp when we had wellnigh reached fairy-land. I am not going to narrate all the wonders of that land, because the editor of this Magazine would immediately return the ponderous MS. by Parcels Delivery, but will merely describe my walk on the borders of the enchanted lake which lies in the centre of fairy-land.

Enchanted in truth! Only a few minutes ago I was in the midst of human industry, aided by every species of modern machinery that can clank, and roar, and rattle. Only a few minutes ago men were shouting, horses scuffling with iron-shod feet on stony roads, cart-wheels were rumbling along, sacks were chasing each other in quick succession to the uppermost windows of lofty factories, leaving a white trail on the wall to mark their passage; barges were disgorging their cargo, and the bargees discharging their imprecations. Sights of unparalleled hideousness offended

the eyes, sounds of horrible discordance grated upon the ear, and the nostrils were saluted with every imaginable variety of offensive odours. If the reader will substitute for the closing word of the last sentence the very strongest term which the English language can supply, he will be the better enabled to realize my meaning.

Even now, if I were disposed to draw upon myself the wrath of the enchanter, and to ascend a tree, I should see the tall factory chimneys vomiting forth their black eruptions, and the church steeples, once so white and comely, now begrimed as if they too were chimneys, and shook and trembled at the measured beat of the engines at their base. In the olden days of England, when sovereigns went a-maying, and fairies danced the green, the prefix of Merry was always attached to this country. But nowadays nobody seems to go a-maying except the sweeps, and the merriment appears to have vanished together with the maypoles and the fairies.

Threefold thanks, then, to the enchanter who has caught one of the fairies ere she could escape, and has cherished her, and made much of her, and endowed her with a peaceful dominion. She has been a grateful fairy, and right well has she repaid her entertainer. If the reader should be curious to know her name, and that of the magician, he will find them at the end of this paper.

Only a few minutes ago, such sights, and sounds, and st—I mean, odours; and now what a change! As far as the eye can reach there is waving foliage, with all the sweet and varied scenery of the early year: the skylarks overhead bubble over with melody, and the branches are filled with the merry carols of the feathery songsters; while those who cannot sing do their best to imitate their more favoured species, and twitter forth their happiness in the fulness of their ecstasy. And in the far distance the ceaseless caw of the rooks loses its harshness, and acts as a running bass to the higher melodies around, softening and blending them together into one harmonious song of praise. Many an anthem have I heard in many a cathedral, enhanced by all the accessories of towered organ and surpliced choir; but never yet did I hear songs of praise so melting, so rapturous, and so elevating as this spontaneous outburst of unalloyed happiness, without any accessories whatever, save those of the sunshine and the breeze. *Sursum corda.*

Yet there are sounds which in another place might seem harsh, but which here find their proper consonance. High over head the clangour of the heron's cry is heard, as she sails on vast pinions to the lake; or the loud, querulous clatter from a neighbouring tree betrays the fact that she has brought home her prey, and is feeding her young. The short, raucous call of the carrion crow draws our attention to the sable bird as he soars in mid-air; and the ear-piercing scream of the wind-hover hawk heralds his rushing sweep upon his nest. Yet here these sounds seem no longer to be harsh, because they are in the right place; they give force and depth to

nature's symphony, like judicious discords in a concerted piece, and are essential constituents of the universal diapason.

The soft, balmy air of approaching summer toys daintily with the trembling leaves ; a thousand sweet odours from the flowers of spring greet the senses ; and the hum of multitudinous bees falls soothingly on the ear. The sunbeams glitter on the rippling surface of the lake, the breeze sweeps over its waters, and the plashing wavelets fall with a pleasant monotony of sound upon its margin.

I *must* go and look at those herons, and watch them as they carry on the various affairs of life with so much composure, caring nothing for the presence of a spectator. There, in a snug corner, sheltered from the chilling blasts of the north wind, and formed so as to receive and retain the warmth of the genial sunbeams, several herons are clustered together, assuming the strange and varied attitudes which characterize those birds. One is standing on a single leg, with head and neck sunk in the plumage of the shoulders, and the beautiful tuft of dark-tipped breast feathers fluttering in the breeze. Another stalks with measured steps over the grass, lifting its feet as if the blades were bristling bayonets, over which it must carefully pick its way, and nodding its long neck in unison with its tread, precisely like a camel on the march.

A third is going to fish. Steadily and slowly it wades into the water, until the feathers of the breast just sweep the surface ; and there it stands, motionless as a statue, with ear and eye alike vigilant, and watching for prey. What a beautiful bird the heron is ! and what a wonderful effect is produced as the glittering wavelets of the lake are reflected on its soft, grey plumage, rippling in mimic chase along the feathers ! Presently, with a quick, sharp dart, like the stroke of a snake, the heron's beak is plunged among the rushes, and withdrawn again, bearing some captive which I cannot recognize. The prey is swallowed, and the heron then commences an examination of the dry twigs and sticks that fringe the lake. First she picks up one by the middle, shakes it, seems to weigh it, and then throws it aside. A second, a third, and a fourth are subjected to the same ordeal, until at last the fastidious bird seems satisfied, takes up the selected twig, and, spreading her broad pinions, sails away with it to her nest. Thither I follow, and, leaning against the trunk of a fine elm tree, find myself for the first time in a heronry.

It is a grand sight, and, in imagination, transports the observer to tropical climates. We have so few fine birds in England nowadays ; the stork has forsaken us for many a long year, the bustard may now be considered as extinct in this island, and the heron alone is left to us. Excepting sportsmen and practical naturalists, there are few who have seen half a dozen herons at liberty, and year by year this number decreases. Every one who can fire a gun will shoot at a heron when he sees it, though the bird would be totally useless to him when he had succeeded in killing it. Therefore, the herons are gradually ejected from the country, and

those that still favour us with their presence are shy and wary, very seldom permitting a human being to come within gunshot. How charming, then, must it not be to meet with an enchanted lake, where herons are as plentiful as ducks in a farmyard pond, and where the noble birds are so confident, that they will permit themselves to be watched without betraying any alarm! It was very strange to be walking about under the trees of the heronry; to hear the wild, ringing cries of the parents, and the impatient clatter of the young; to pick up the delicately tinted egg-shells under the trees, and to see the birds alighting on the slender twigs, flapping their wings as they settled, so as to break the force of the descent.

Of course the carrion crow has its nest at hand. It always follows the heron, and builds in close proximity to its long-beaked ally. Sometimes it amuses itself by chasing the heron through the air, but it bears no malice, and inflicts no injury. Strange nests they are of the heron,—great flat masses of sticks,—each tree possessing from one to five of these structures. Within a stone's throw of the tree under which I was standing thirty-five nests were visible. The outer world that surrounds fairy-land has an idea that the herons make a hole in their nests for the accommodation of their legs, and though the nests are plainly visible, even to profane eyes,—perfect, simple, without the least trace of a hole in them,—the erratic world in question declines to alter its opinion.

I wander slowly along the water's edge. Splash! goes something into the lake close by my feet, flinging some drops of water in my face, and causing a series of concentric ripples to speed themselves in ever-widening circles, becoming fainter and fainter as they extend, until they lose themselves in the varied shadows that flit over the lake. It is only a water-rat,—a misnomer, by the way, the creature not being a rat, but a beaver,—and there he swims quietly along, his brown fur and flat-tipped head just appearing above the surface. In any other place but fairy-land he would have taken the alarm long ago, but here he has only two enemies,—namely, the pike and the heron, and he fears no two-legged animal unless it be feathered as well as biped.

What is that strange cry that rings, trumpet-toned, over the water, and is followed by angry hisses and discordant croakings? The cry resounds from the opposite side of the lake; perhaps the mystery will be resolved when I reach the spot whence the strange sounds proceed.

I sit down with my back against a tree, and with a double glass scan everything within view. There is something under that simple stone bridge that crosses a rippling stream, which empties itself into the lake. These are two objects that move about, backwards and forwards, this way and that, but they never leave the shadow of the stone above their heads. Their form is familiar, but their colours cannot be seen, owing to the darkness of their resting-place. I drop behind a little rising ground, crawl gently towards the spot, taking advantage of every tree-trunk to cover my advance, and gain some thirty yards on them. It is true, they really are

teal, though I should hardly have believed any one who said that he had seen a pair of teal at this time of the year. I know that a few individuals stay in this country throughout the breeding season, but I never thought I should have seen them. Flattering their self-delusion, I pretend not to notice them; and, passing round at a respectful distance, cross the little streamlet with a jump, and return to the water's edge, leaving the teal quite satisfied that they have escaped observation.

Suddenly, from out of the rushes at my feet something brown flashes into the air, with a loud shriek, as if of terror, and a fiery rush, as if it were going at least twenty miles without stopping. It is only *the* snipe. There is always a snipe just in that spot. Every one sees it, so it need not be frightened, and call "Murder!" in that ridiculous manner. Neither need it dash off at such a pace, for instead of going twenty miles, as its first rush seems to portend, it satisfies itself with as many yards, and settles down quite easily on a tuft of grass by the water-side.

I used to think that coots were shy birds, but verily this is an enchanted lake, and perhaps the birds are affected by the glamourie that is cast around it. Here are some coots within ten yards, and they take no more heed of me than if I were a tree or a post. How admirably they quarter their ground, like well-trained pointers, traversing every inch of space with conscientious care! How pretty they look, as they swim backwards and forwards, the white plate on their foreheads contrasting so well with the jetty head and neck! and how curiously the white front is reflected in the water, as the bird paddles restlessly to and fro! Then its cry, what a strange sound it is!—sometimes short, sweet, and musical, like a *staccato* note upon a clarinet; and sometimes quick and metallic, as if you were to press a piece of watch-spring on the table, lift up one end, and let it fall smartly on the wood.

I am evidently nearing some special haunt of wild-fowl, for with a loud "quack," up spring some ducks, make a short sweep in the air, and descend obliquely on the lake, at a little distance, their legs dangling in the water before they alight, and making a loud splashing noise as they plough through the water, dashing up a mimic spray before them. Then, when they settle, how oddly they look about them, and give their tails a self-satisfied wag, as if to say, "There, did we not do *that* well?" On they go, with a long, steady progress, each duck leaving behind it a lengthening wake, like the letter V laid on the water, the bird forming the apex thereof. Overhead, high overhead, there is a loud clangour, softened by distance, and on looking up, a small flock of ducks is seen, indulging in an aerial excursion, their necks outstretched, and their wings appearing to be set where their tails ought to be, and altogether raising a feeling of wonder that they do not overbalance themselves, and topple over, like tumbler pigeons.

Fairy-land is rather swampy hereabouts, and I have to pick my steps from one rush tuft to another, to cross bridges of novel and ingenious

construction, befitting the locality, and to distrust any patch of peculiarly green moss, knowing the black mud that underlies it. Here is a path at last, a pleasant path by the lake side, winding away into the distance, and quite refreshing after the wet and uncertain ground of the last four hundred yards. That path, however, I am not destined to take, for, from a clump of long grasses by its side, up springs a great feathered creature, and utters a trumpet-like cry—it has before resounded in my ears. The call is answered from the water, and almost before I can recognize the bird, a companion comes dashing fiercely over the lake, scrambles hastily ashore, and straightway offers battle. An enchanted lake indeed! These are no denizens of England, and yet their wings are uncut, and their limbs are free; they are Canadian geese on the border of an English lake. The goose retires to her nest, a mere depression in the grass, and the gander challenges me afresh. Advancing within six paces, the bellicose bird begins to utter the most extraordinary sounds, and to contort himself into the most singular attitudes. The latter I succeeded in sketching; the former are quite inexpressible by any musical symbols. The bird lowers his head to the ground, writhing his long neck like a snake's body, flaps his wings, sidles restlessly about, and gives vent to a series of sounds that very much resemble the incipient bray of a young donkey. Menace, however, is clearly expressed, and nothing I can do seems to please the bird. If I retreat a step, he thinks I am afraid of him, and comes hissing after me; if I advance a step, he thinks I am about to invade the nest, and redoubles his clatter and wing-flapping. Not wishing to disturb the estimable mother who has retired to her nest, I make a compromise, and instead of directly retreating or advancing from or to the nest, I push my way through a thicket, and making a *détour*, come out again upon the shining waters, leaving the goose still standing by her large, pale eggs, the gander victorious and exultant, and a portion of my coat sleeve upon a bramble.

There is a problem yet to be solved. How came these black-necked, brown-backed, white-patched birds to be breeding in sober England, when they ought to have been sitting on their eggs in Northern America? They are not detained here, except by moral bonds, for down the lake you may see quite a little flock of the birds flying with powerful wing, and perfectly capable of regaining their liberty if they wished to do so. The solution of this problem is simple enough. They came of their own accord, and have stayed for the same good reason. During some migration they saw the lake, stopped upon it, and found that they were in good quarters, where they could obtain plenty of food, and where no one spoilt their amusement by powder and shot. The wiser among them, therefore, made up their minds to stay; the more foolish went away, to run the gauntlet of all the fowling-pieces on their road. Some of those who remained on the lake mated with each other, while others preferred to retain their state of single freedom.

By this time the sun has nearly achieved his westward journey, the shadows of all the trees stretch far over the fields, and I direct my steps

homewards. Skirting the thick woods, the pheasants trip merrily along, the slanting rays gilding their glittering plumage as they run quickly past the little apertures through which the sunbeams shine. Here comes a squirrel along the hedge, and I stop to look at him. He sees me, pauses for a moment as if to consider, cocks up his bushy tail, runs forward a few paces, stops again, and then patters away for ten or twelve yards in the quick, jerking manner of his tribe.

A few steps farther, and all is changed; the lake is not visible, though a babbling brook, sunk deeply in its rocky bed, tells of its outlet. Mead, hill, and plain have disappeared, and I plunge into a thick mass of spruce firs, which spread their dark boughs above, shut out the still blue sky, and cast a deep and sombre shadow upon the ground. "To-whoo, whoo, whoo," cries an owl continuously overhead. Guided by the sound, I proceed towards the spot whence the weird-like cry proceeds, and soon detect the particular tree on which the owl is sitting. Not that I can see her, for the branches are far too thick to permit a bird to be seen through them; but upon the ground beneath the tree lie several masses, apparently of grey felt, containing a skull—always one skull,—some bones, and the fur of mice. These are the famed "pellets" of the owl, on which she lays her eggs, which, in spite of their unpromising appearance when fresh, soon become dry, soft, and yielding, with a kind of elastic crispness to the touch, forming an admirable bed for the rough white eggs, and the downy puffs which issue from them, and think themselves owlets.

Sweeter sounds yet thrill upon the ear. Skipping from bush to bush, and resting himself for a few moments upon a dried thorn spray, the wren carols forth his merry song, so like that of the hedge-sparrow, that the ear can scarcely distinguish between them, and so loud, that one can scarce conceive how such a volume of sound can issue from such a mite of a bird. In the distance the full, reedy notes of the blackbird are heard, as he sits by the nest which no one will disturb in this favoured region; and from the branches of a neighbouring tree the stormcock performs a merry flourish,—as well he may, considering that a part of the grounds were laid out expressly for his accommodation, and service trees planted for no other purpose than to give him food.

Who is the fairy that has founded this second Eden? and who is the magician that has cast his spells upon her? The name of the fairy is Benevolence, and when we address the enchanter, we call him "Squire." Is not this in truth a fairy-land? To me it is more than fairy-land—a little paradise on earth. Often, while wandering silently among its wonders, drinking in the varied beauties with which it teems, I have contrasted its peaceful repose with the rush, and the roar, and the strife of the outer world in which my days are unwillingly passed, and yearned to be the lord of some such happy valley.

SOCIETY IN THE SCHWARZWALD.

THERE ! my title is written, and now that most important part of any one's MS. is settled, let me ask myself, Who cares for Schwarzwalden society ?

Not many, perhaps ; but the title is alliterative, and then every one likes a little gossip, and to be told how other people manage matters. Our light literature—that of all nations—is a convincing proof of the curiosity each branch of society feels as to the doings of the rest. When we steady-going people take up a fashionable novel—I mean one professing to describe the fashionable world—it is not so much because we care for the ultimate fortunes of the hero and heroine, as because we like to know, or fancy we know, how *Belgavia* feels and acts. Thus, books taking us into assemblies of pickpockets and thieves, into the most loathsome scenes, and introducing so many new words that they require a glossary, are read and quoted by the innocent and refined. It is quite a new world, and yet its inhabitants are of our own species, and share all our passions ; we must see more of them.

What took all the world to hear "*La Traviata*" ? Not the music. Verdi has composed many better operas. It was pure curiosity ; it was such a tempting opportunity of getting a glimpse of a class whose very existence we are otherwise bound to ignore.

Having thus settled—to my own satisfaction, at least—that some people may and can take an interest in the denizens of the Black Forest, the next question is, Have I anything to tell about them ?

I think I have. I think I could tell something new, even to those who know the Rhine by heart, and have sauntered about all the great German capitals.

The upper ten thousands of the globe resemble each other everywhere ; they have rolled about and mixed with the world till all their angles are worn down ; they are like a bag of marbles, and only an experienced eye can detect whether they are taws or alleys. Great towns, too, are monotonously like one another. One has a cathedral, another its *Walhalla*, its museums, its opera, as its distinctive feature, which stands out and is fixed in our memory. Otherwise, one place is mixed up with another in a jumble of narrow streets and tall houses, dust, dirt, bright shop windows, high prices, seatless shops, extortionate traneamen, intolerable smells, and garrulous guides.

And so with the hotels ; they are all alike. Who can distinguish the *Hôtel d'Angleterre* from the *Folkestone*, the *Schweizer*, *La France* ? They have all the same great bell, the same jacketed waiters, the same passages—only more or less bewildering,—the same gilding in the *salle à manger* or *speis saal*, the same weary dinners, the same odours. Now it is useless to fancy one sees the life of the country in these places, or in the first-class railway carriages. The natives never visit either. Unless you care more

for seeing sights than people, stay at home and read your Murray; you will gain much more information, with infinitely less trouble and expense.

Now with me the case is very different; I have settled in Germany, have mingled with the people, am no longer looked upon as a "foreigner"—no slight distinction that,—and so can tell something about their primitive ways.

In the first place, I must remark that there is nothing a thorough-paced German detests so much as foreigners and novelty; they consider it a patriotic duty to abhor both. You need not come from another country to be "fremd;" let a Saxon settle in Hesse, a Prussian in Baden, they will be reckoned as "fremden," and brow-beaten and treated accordingly, till years of patient endurance shall have won pardon for their crime in not having always lived in that part of the world. The stranger's ways are not their ways, and therefore must be wrong. "Make them pay, they are strangers!" is the cry in all ranks, from the highest to the lowest. Have you a dispute with a cabman or porter? are you overcharged by a tradesman? Do not expect that servant or landlady will defend your interests; you are a stranger, and therefore it is their duty to see you "taken in." And when we poor English are the victims, they positively delight in sacrificing us;—"What business have you among them?"

If you meekly express disapprobation when the postman forgets to deliver your letters, or something similar occurs,—if you only hint that time is precious, and punctuality a virtue,—you are at once reminded that you are not in England—as if it were ever possible to forget it!—and told that what suits Germans may do for you, and you have no option but to submit. A time will come, however, when many of these prejudices must disappear; we may say a time has come, for the railroad, that potent agitator, that universal rouser of dormant communities, is already stirring up the most lethargic corners of sleepy Germany.

I was established in the midst of an out-of-the-way little town, which led a comfortable, thriving life in one of the most beautiful parts of southern Germany. It did a nice little business with its neighbourhood, just what it could transact before its 12 o'clock dinner; had its vineyards and numerous breweries, its forests and its herds; it never exported anything, therefore all the necessaries of life were to be had at a price that might seem incredibly small to English readers. It lived in itself and for itself, with a garrison and university, just to keep it from utter stagnation. It had a little newspaper consisting of two or three pages, and a little theatre. If a stranger came to the town, it was but for a day or two,—in at one gate, out at the other, just enough to keep two hotels going. The obnoxious Pariah saw the gem of a cathedral, and climbed up a mountain or two, looking down on the wee town, which nestled so snugly under the hills. He gazed on the bright landscape, on the broad plain, stretching on till it touches the Rhine, and is bounded by the hills of France,—a plain dotted with village and grove, and streaked by

broad roads, unwinding their white lines in all directions. He traced the little river which, uncontaminated by trade, sparkled and splashed and hurried on, to lose itself in the mighty stream, and looked like a silver ribbon winding over an outspread mantle of green velvet. He turned again to the wooded heights rising one above the other, all thickly clothed in every variety of verdure; the snowy tops of some now flashing in the sun, now mingling with some white cloud. He saw this, and admired the loveliness, the richness of the scene. But then he went away again; the most adventurous discoverer never thought of settling here. Those "were the days when Thalata was young," the golden days of our poor dear town.

At last, wild, speculative men, "fremd" every one of them, some, too, with suspiciously dark hair and hook noses, began to buy land in a straight line before the ramparts; then workmen followed, who piled up the ground in some places, cut it down in others; and suddenly the town awoke to the fact that a railroad was panting and snorting and puffing away at the miraculous rate of forty miles an hour, close to its very doors. It did not at first see all the miseries attendant on the steaming monster; no, it was too innocent. Besides, it was so well guarded, it could never be corrupted by change. It pointed with pride to its sister university—Heidelberg. There the students were always making a *spektakel Anglice* row; here they might not raise their voices after eleven:—in all university towns at a quarter to eleven a bell is rung, and then the guests begin to leave the beerhouses, which must be closed at eleven. There half the population were Jews; here a Jew was not allowed to pass even one night, except at the biennial fairs, and then they were compelled to use one particular inn, kept solely for their use. In the fall of last year the Jews were, for the first time, admitted to common rights, and allowed to settle. No; the town snapped its fingers at the railroad, and turned round to take another nap; but, poor dear old thing, it has never had a good sound sleep since. People would make a noise. There was the revolution of 1848; and, somehow or other, no one has had a day's quiet since the railroad stretched its iron feelers over those luxuriant meadows.

This was the state of the town when we came into it; but since then what a change has taken place! The young men would not stay at home with that locomotive passing and repassing before them; two trunk-makers sprung up; people began to move about and to grow speculative; foreigners—Russians and English—came, attracted by the extreme beauty of the spot, and the cheap prices of everything—intending to settle, too; but there were no houses. We had the best of the only three apartments to be let in the place; our rent was instantly tripled. Without waiting to see if their geese would lay golden eggs, the simple townfolk killed them all at once. They asked enormous sums for most uncomfortable lodgings; and when they had frightened every one away, they decided to build. The town was to build six houses, containing three flats each! It took two years to come to this momentous decision, and two more to lay the foundations;

meanwhile, whoever wanted a house was told, in every variety of tone, that "the town was going to build." Some shook their heads at such a wild speculation, others foretold a golden harvest; but every one discovered that the necessities of life had become much dearer, and laid all the blame on the three or four foreign families who had contrived to locate themselves here. They never perceived that a brisk export trade was going on; that on market days whole loads of hampers filled with butter, fruits, vegetables, poultry, and eggs, were sent off by the railroad; that their very cattle was carted off. The peasant knew this; but he kept his counsel, sold his produce, and grew rich.

The peasants in the south of Baden are very rich. Not long since a Bauer went into a silversmith's shop, and ordered twelve gold tablespoons. "Twelve!" exclaimed the tradesman; "why, this is a regal order: do you know what you are about?" "To be sure I do," said the peasant. "I have twelve *stuck kinder* [heads of children], and I mean each to have a gold spoon on its wedding day; so mind you make them strong and solid: never mind the price, that's my affair."

The town itself at last found out all this. It was obliged to widen its bridges and alter its roads for the accommodation of the wood-carts. Long lorries came hurrying down from the forest hills, bearing the tall trees which had formerly been cut on the spot to a more portable shape, but were now sent off in their pristine size; many to tower among some forest of masts, others for every kind of building purpose. Fuel rose from five or six to twenty guldens the load, and the poor trees wandered away to France, Spain, and even Algeria.

Had not those foreigners ruined the place? and how the ladies used to scold at us and our ways at their coffee parties!

A German coffee is a pleasant thing of the kind in some respects, but quite different from English parties. In the first place, it is an entirely feminine assembly, to which no men are admitted. You are expected to come about two, and to leave at six; you must be sure to bring your work, most commonly some kind of knitting, and you must be well up in all the *on dits* of the neighbourhood. To talk of books would be pedantic. Some old young lady may, perhaps, venture to speak of the last new novel, which came out two years ago; but the mammas are too much occupied with their housekeeping to think of anything but themselves and their mutual kitchens. The gentlemen are quite right to keep away from these parties, but they do not do much better at their own, be it said *en passant*.

If the party be given at the lady's own house, you must eat of every cake, admire all, and be sure to ask if they were not home-made, and beg for a few receipts. You must not be uncomfortable if your hostess and her daughters are never still, but wait on you yourselves. The servants never hand anything round; that is done by the young ladies. It is a remnant of the olden days, and has a hearty simplicity in it which is not ungraceful; but on the rare occasions, when gentlemen are present, it grates against all

but German ideas to see them sitting to be waited on like so many pachas. In summer these parties are always given in some tea gardens. You walk out in a body with your inevitable knitting, and take your coffee, sausage, ham, and cakes; then the young people are sent to play: girls of eighteen and twenty play at thread-the-needle, hunt-the-hare, and so forth; and the matrons work or play cards, while the hostess assists to clear the table. That done, you have to begin eating again, more cakes and curds, wine and fruit; then you put up your work and walk home again, to be in time to give your husband his seven o'clock supper. You have had a delightful walk, but otherwise you cannot help owning to yourself that your pleasure has been rather prosy. It may, however, be some comfort to you that you have been comparing notes about dress and dishes with a Frau Baronin or Gräfin, that you know that the Frau Hofrathin has sent her daughter to the Adler, or the Deutschen Hof to learn cooking, and that Frau Stadt Director and Frau Major have quarrelled or become reconciled.

These titles! what a dreadful nuisance they are to the uninitiated! Every gentleman is a Herr something or other, and you must never forget to call his wife by her husband's title. Frau Physikus must not be called Frau Doctor, for Physikus is the higher dignity; and Hofrath and Stadtrath are different; and then there is Forstrath again, and a dozen more raths; and Amtmanns and Oberamtmanns; and Directors, Professors, Pfarrers, Fabrikants—what not? And then the officers, too! it is a never-ending task to learn and recollect all these different dignitaries.

The love of rank and title is inherent in us all, but I never saw it carried to such a length as in the petty towns of Germany, where every one seems miserable unless he has some sort of a handle to his name. An Irish gentleman who resided in our town was so anxious to fall into the prevailing mode, that he dubbed himself "General" in the Directory, in order, as he said, that the people might know he was somebody. His real position was an army surgeon's, but he wished to distinguish himself from the common herd of doctors. I have heard of the wife of a fire hose manufacturer who chose to be addressed as Frau Feuer-Losch-Spritz Fabrikant.

The next thing that strikes us after the multiplicity of titles is the great pretensions made by the nobility—the *sous* or *petite noblesse*—who, in position, education, and fortune, are far inferior to our county gentry. They have nothing but birth, mere birth, without influence or riches and their concomitant refinements. Yet they affect to look down on trade, and despise the lowly born. In many states they have a few privileges—remnants of the feudal ages—but with many disadvantages. The greatest drawback is, that in some parts of Germany every pursuit but that of arms is closed to them; in others, they may enter into any of the liberal professions, but cannot go into trade. In Bavaria they can only become brewers. They cannot all turn farmers, for many have no estate to cultivate, and have no prospect of ever possessing any greater territory than the six feet

of earth which we all must have one day. The caste, too, remains stationary; titles do not die out, as with us, to be renewed in a fresher branch. A Graf, or a Baron, marries a Grafen or Baroness, and all their children, boys and girls, have the title, and in their turn transmit it to their posterity, on the sole condition of marrying a person of noble birth. This perpetuates the name, but produces a race of high-born paupers, and hence the German nobility are the poorest and proudest in Europe. If a nobleman marries a woman of low degree, only the eldest son has the title, though the "Von"—that aristocratic particle—remains by courtesy to the other children, and their lucky elder brother can be father to a dozen noble men and women, if he only marry a lady with the proper amount of quarterings in her shield.

The haughtiest of all these good people are the *Frei Herrn*; it is a rank which is now only attained by descent, and they delight in saying that any tailor can buy a barony, but that no ruler can make a *Frei Herr*. They date from the earliest days of the Middle Ages, and are coeval with the *leudes* of the Frank kings. They are to be found in all the ranks of the nobility.

And now to return to my ladies, whom I have left at their coffee. Though they seldom talk about books, they are not uneducated, and there are few among them who cannot speak French fluently. English is very fashionable with the young ladies, and they delight in our light literature. They allow that we excel them in our needles, pins, and novels: some add, in our constitution—the political one, I mean; but this is not a universal opinion, and is only enounced by the radicals. Generally speaking, a thorough-paced German considers it unpatriotic not to give the palm to the "fatherland" in everything. Their prevailing idea is that they beat us to nothing as housekeepers. I doubt it. To be sure, they do not consider a young lady's education finished till she has gone to a good hotel to learn cooking; but, as far as I can tell, this cooking accomplishment shares the fate of music, and the many things which girls acquire as indispensable, and married women forget. In fact, how should it be otherwise? Hotel cookery is so different from that in a private family; why, the mere paraphernalia of pots and pans would be a ruinous expenditure for a narrow income. However, it is necessary here:—I mean the learning; the practice is optional. Only you must have your cookery-book at your fingers' ends, and talk a great deal about your housekeeping; and if you can manage to have your hand as coarse as your cook's, you will gain universal applause.

The truth is, German women do not do so much more for their families than Englishwomen of narrow incomes; only we hold our tongues, while they are constantly proclaiming their merit to the world. They will not believe that we ever enter our kitchens, because nothing is said in our novels about our exertions in that line; but how many families in England would never taste pie or pudding, jam or jelly, if they were left to the

mercies of the one servant! Then the German ladies glory in the hard work of housekeeping. I have seen a clergyman's wife cleaning her windows, while one servant was knitting and the other spinning. There is no accounting for tastes. Among us the glory of good housekeeping is to let no one see the details; the Germans are always flourishing their ladles and skewers in your face. They are not such good needlewomen as we are: though they excel us in knitting and fancy work, we beat them hollow in plain work. When a girl is seventeen or eighteen she is sent to a sewing school, to learn what we picked up in our infancy; after that she will be taught dressmaking, and an ironer will come to the house, to give her lessons in clear-starching and ironing. Meanwhile, there will always be workwomen about the place, mending and making, turning and altering, and doing the work at which an English mother of the middle classes is eternally employed. It is amusing to see what a fuss they make about this same learning. They cannot understand how one does a thing just through watching and imitating others, and using one's common sense. Had Eve been a German, Adam would have been condemned to raw food for all his life; she would never have found out how to cook it without being taught.

I must own it does provoke me to see the airs these women give themselves about their housewifely merits, just because spinning is not yet obsolete among them, and that woven stockings are not in fashion. And this knitting is a lazy kind of industry: it only employs the fingers; it is quite independent of eyes or mind. Except at the church or theatre, they are never without their knitting; even at an auction, out come the needles.

An auction is another odd sight, but the dawdling progress of the business, and the time that is lost, would drive an English person wild. There are no catalogues, and the lots are brought forward almost at hazard. If the sale take place on account of a death, everything is sold; not only the wearing apparel, but all the old rubbish, the contents of the rag-bag, everything. I have seen ladies try the size of a pair of *old* shoes, and then have an animated bidding for them. I have seen a disconsolate widow in comfortable circumstances bring forward the dear departed's old gloves and cravats, with the creases of long wear in them,—ay, and expatiate on their worth, and run them up when the bidding was slack,—and respectable persons would buy them. One day, a pair of black satin——“a garment which it does not become a lady to particularize,” was brought forward, and handed round for inspection among the ladies. It was objected that that style was never worn now.

“But such good satin!” said the auctioneer; “you can always turn that to account. See, now, you could get two bonnets out of it.”

“Well, that's true,” said a lady; “Mark's a practical man, one *could* find enough in good condition for a bonnet;” and after a lively competition the lot was knocked down to a Frau Professorin.

Although the things are sold without any arrangement, there is a kind of order observed. The kitchen utensils go first, then the linen and clothes, and then the furniture,—and it is all done in one room. They pick out the largest in the suite to hold the company, so one must go an hour beforehand to get a seat near the table, which is placed before the door of an inner room, and forms a barricade for the auctioneer and two clerks. Within are the family, and all the things which are to be sold. These are brought forward as they come to hand, and then carefully inspected by the assembly, who go on bidding *kreuzers*—or the third of a penny—till they arrive at sixty, which makes a *gulden* (1s. 8d. English). After that, you bid *groschens* or three *kreuzers*, and then one often gets into a terrible puzzle as to what sum one is really offering. The auctioneer, it is true, helps his customers by adding the number of *guldens* occasionally, but fancy bidding fifty-three *threepences*! Cocker himself would not like that work. At about five or six *guldens*, one begins to bid by *streich*,—a *streich* being the quarter of a *gulden*. When you have bought an article it is handed over to you, and be it china or a saucepan, you must dispose of it as you can, on your lap or under your chair; no one but yourself is responsible for it now, and as it is not ticketed, your only security is to keep it by your side. Strangers are on this account expected to pay money down, and then they may walk off with their purchases; but all this takes up a great deal of time, and causes much confusion and noise. Every now and then old Mark rings a bell, and refuses to go on unless the assemblage is silent. The prevailing rule in auctions holds good here as in England,—the rubbish is sold for more than it is worth, but the better furniture goes cheap.

It is *de rigueur* for the ladies of the family to be present at the sale. They must bring forward the things themselves, point out their merits, and run them up. No good housekeeper must neglect any of these duties. I cannot say what their servants are doing, they are not seen; the ladies are the active agents. According to this system it takes two or three days to sell what an Englishman would knock off in as many hours.

We English cannot understand this selling in such a public manner the very clothes of the dead;—the slippers, the morning gown which had almost taken the father's form, garments which, from long wear and many associations, seem a part of the lost one; we could not expose the cap, which may have been worn in the last days of health, or was made by fingers which will never again clasp ours. We are not a sentimental nation; we do not deal in long-winded analyses of our feelings; yet such scenes as I have been describing would seem a desecration to us. We could not, while still in our mourning garments, see rude and unsympathizing strangers inspecting all those little hoards, valueless in themselves, but almost sacred to us. We could give them away; if in narrow circumstances, we might sell them in a lot; but I am sure we could not endure to dispose of them separately for pence. However, it is a mere matter of

feeling after all, and we must not judge all the world by our English standard, which, as foreigners complain, we are too fond of doing.

The most constant attendants at these auctions are young ladies about to be married. It is the wife who furnishes the house and provides the linen; so as soon as a girl is engaged, she and her mother begin to buy furniture, and make sheets and tablecloths. It is extraordinary what immense stocks of linen and underclothing are considered necessary; dozens upon dozens of every article. It is really a large sum lying dead, a capital which produces no interest; but it is the pride of a real German woman's heart to look at her cumbrous closets piled up with fine linen, which seldom sees the light except to be bleached, and to be able to say, "I only have a wash once in six months."

An engagement is naturally a great phase in every woman's life, but it seems to be *the* epoch of German existence. There is no mystery, no concealment about it. As soon as the betrothal takes place it is announced to the world,—to the private acquaintances by cards, sometimes by an advertisement in the papers; to society in general by the happy pair appearing in public arm-in-arm. The young lady is bound to look as if she were in the seventh heaven, and generally clasps both hands tightly round her lover's arm, as if to prevent all possibility of escape. She must also loudly proclaim his perfections and her happiness, have no hesitation in speaking about him, nor in kissing before folks; reserve in these cases is not understood. The gentleman seems to take it as easily as he can, but, as usual, is far more awkward in his new situation than his fair one. After all, it is not comfortable for a poor man, who has always been accustomed to walk alone and swing his arms, to find them hampered by a girl clutching at them, and to have her erinoline always beating about his legs. Then, if she be short, he must not walk upright, he must go crooked, as if drawn down by the interesting weight hanging on him; if she be tall, her bonnet trimmings tickle him so, and he can never keep step with his fair companion. It requires a great deal of affection to smile under these circumstances. Until a girl is engaged she never takes any man's arm. I wonder the young ladies do not learn how to do it in their dancing lessons, it would be a great blessing to their lovers. Their mothers cannot teach them; for as soon as the honeymoon is over, man and wife go their separate ways. The wonder is how these attachments are formed, the sexes have so little intercourse except in the ball-room. Fathers and brothers spend their evenings in their respective beerhouses with their own sets, the mothers and sisters flock in troops to their coffee-houses. They have their separate amusements and pleasures, until suddenly a couple fall in love somehow, and then they are never seen apart; they become inseparable, like poker and tongs, knife and fork, or any other implement which is useless without its fellow. As long as the gentleman remains in the town, his charmer dresses much better than usual; but if he must leave, she renounces all society, or if she cannot help "breaking

resolution," it is essential that she should make a "guy" of herself. A peculiar toilette—covered neck and long sleeves, in a ball-room, are as much a sign of betrothal as our widow's cap is of bereavement.

If it were a *bond fide* high dress, it would not be so bad; but generally it is a makeshift, and strikes one by its oddness. The Germans are not good dressers. They follow the fashion implicitly, passively, without venturing to modify it so as to suit them, and there is no persuading a native milliner to sacrifice fashion in order to render a garment becoming or appropriate. I do not think you would find an old lady's cap or bonnet from one end of the country to the other: wrinkles and all must be exposed like the youngest face; the palsied head must tremble under flowers. Their only idea of suiting an old lady is to make her shoes like canoes, her dresses like sacks, slack and comfortable. That she should have feminine instincts enough to care for well-fitting garments is incomprehensible to them. Another thing they cannot understand is the English habit of never leaving the bedroom with uncombed locks and dressing-gown.

"What! do you always dress entirely before breakfast? But then you never go into your kitchens."

"Nonsense! we are not all millionaires: we do a great deal in a quiet way."

"But you don't work as we do, or you would never have time to dress yourselves. Every one knows you are no housekeepers."

And that settles the matter.

Though one laughs at these little things, one cannot help allowing that in some respects the Germans have the advantage over us. They take their pleasures in a much more reasonable manner, and therefore have a great deal more amusement in the course of the year than we English dare allow ourselves. Our little town has its theatre, which is open four times a week through the winter, and which has a very good average company for plays and operas. Every one goes to it; the gentry, and even the middling shopkeepers have their boxes, or at least a season ticket in the stalls. The students fill the pit, and are let in at half-price. The officers have the first two rows in the stall, and pay about fourpence; the common soldiers go into the gallery for a penny. The doors open at half-past five, and it is all over before nine. You walk in, hang up your muffings at the back of your box, and your maid comes and fetches you with the lantern. The servants collect in the vestibule about eight, and have a nice gossip while waiting for their young ladies, who go habitually without a chaperone. Non-subscribers pay one and two pence in the best places, the centre box being reserved for them; and if, when you have bought your tickets, the weather or any unforeseen circumstance prevent your going, the good-natured old box-keeper will give you back your money; it is a mere matter of course, and no favour. These quiet ways and early hours take away the feeling of dissipation, and the extreme cheapness of the treat places it within every one's reach. The theatre is open from Michaelmas, or a little

before, till the end of Lent, and is always filled by the same audience. Four nights a week of the theatre is, I think, too much for young people, girls especially, whose predisposition to romance is thus nursed as in a hot-bed. But it would not do our young men any harm if such an intellectual recreation were to be made come-at-able among us. They sit in a close theatre for hours, body and mind wearied at last by the succession of sensation drama and farce, and leave it too tired for enjoyment, too excited for rest; and then it is that, with every feeling aroused, they are exposed to the most fearful temptations. This is not merely making a toil of pleasure, it is making a sin of it.

The German balls are just as reasonable in their way as German theatres. Almost every town has two or three different classes of subscription balls, its museum, or its casino, and all assemble very early; indeed, the tradespeople are the latest, as they must wait to shut up shop. We gentry begin dancing at seven, and we must be in the ball-room soon after six, or the chaperones would find no comfortable seats, and the young ladies would lose their best chance of partners. The girls seldom sit down, that would crush their draperies, but stand about in clusters near their mammas, while the gentlemen walk up and down to make their selection. An introduction generally takes place, but it is not indispensable. In the ball-room you are all on an equality, and any gentleman has a right to ask a lady to dance without further formality, nor can she refuse unless she be already engaged. Between the dances the girls walk about with each other, and the gentlemen hover around. If a girl dance well she is sure of partners, be she ever so ugly. The Germans complain that the English are very heavy, so we generally sit a great deal, though considered the beauties of the room. The dancing begins with a polonaise, in which all—old and young—take a part. It is nothing but a stately march through the ball and supper rooms and passages, and is led by the highest person present. At half-past nine every one stops for supper. You order what you like, from a cup of coffee to a regular hot meal, soup and all, just paying for what you have. Economical people, who live near, go home for their supper. This pause lasts about an hour, then the cotillon begins, and by twelve all is over. I must not forget to mention the "*frei tour*," when the ladies run about and ask the gentlemen. They, modest lambs, crowd up into the corners, but the girls ferret them out. It is rather amusing to watch the skirmish for a favourite partner who must dance with whoever first makes a curtsy to him. He takes her round the room once, and then drops her wherever she happened to pick him up, makes his bow, and is generally whipped off by another claimant. Some girls go very composedly to work, have made up their minds whom they mean to choose, and will not notice any one else; others are in a flurry, get pushed about in the crowd, and take out the first acquaintance they meet. These *frei tours* are introduced to allow a lady a little liberty of choice. There are not above seven or eight dances in the evening, so a belle may be obliged to refuse many

partners; if she invite them in the *frei tour*, it is a sign that they really came too late; if she do not, they are to understand that they are not to ask her again. The gentlemen are sometimes indulged with a *frei tour* on the same principle. The young ladies dress well at these balls; a great deal can be done with white muslin and tarlatane. But the chaperones exhibit a curious variety of toilettes. I remember, at a ball given to the sovereign Prince, seeing one old lady with her head bound up in a strip of flannel, without even a cap or a handkerchief to veil it. The Prince came up and paid his compliments as gravely, and the old lady's daughter danced as much as if her mother's head-dress had been velvet and diamonds, so it made no difference to any one.

There are several masked balls during the Carnival, which are mixed to the last degree; but mothers allow their daughters to frequent them alone and in dominoes, or perhaps take them themselves. This seems very strange, when they talk so much if any young man be admitted intimately to a family circle where there are daughters. At the close of the Carnival, on the last Sunday, a masked ball is given at the Sanger Halle, a very large building, which is then thronged by all classes. Sometimes the young people get up different ballets for the occasion; nothing else is talked about for a week at least, and great is the commiseration extended to us English who cannot be present. The whole town seems mad about it, and it has a known influence on the money lent on pledge at the pawn-broking establishments, which, as in France, is a Government concern. Even respectable married people pawn necessities to be at this ball. A man once sent off his servant to pledge his feather bed, hired a costume with the proceeds, and went to the ball. The maid betrayed him to her mistress, when she instantly pawned the mattress, got her disguise, and set off in quest of her husband. Having discovered him, she flirted with him till he became very pressing to know who she was. "I'm the mattress dancing with the feather bed," she replied; "go home if you would know more."

One does not expect these scenes in quiet Germany. We have taken it into our heads that the natives are a simple-minded, domestic race, far superior to the volatile French, or our own gin-loving artisans. Come and live among them, and you will learn your mistake. There are many reasons for this false impression: first, their authors are not so fond of abusing home usages as ours are; there are not many who enter into details about such scenes, and the testimony of a mere passing traveller is not worth much. You certainly do not see the isolated cases of furious or stupid drunkenness one meets in our back streets; but unless we resolutely ignore everything which opposes our preconceived opinion, we cannot help observing the immense number of drinking-places in every town and village; add to this that you may buy spirits in every grocer's shop, and that many persons distil them at home, and we shall find as large, if not a larger supply than in England, with certainly a more scattered population.

We meet one or two drunken persons in a day's walk in London, we will say; but how many thousands have passed us sober as ourselves! And are these encounters of daily occurrence? Certainly not, as far as my own experience goes. Then beer and light wine do not intoxicate like spirits. I should say the Germans are soakers rather than drunkards; they *will*—pardon the word—large quantities of liquor, and go home muddled. Even the better classes pass their evenings at some beerhouse or club, drinking and smoking till eleven, when they must turn out. The traveller is then most probably in bed, or too tired to be making notes of temperance statistics; and as these tipplers dare not make any noise in the street for fear of the police, Mr. Newcome does not see their zigzag, uncertain course, takes it for granted that no one drinks in Germany, and deploras the degrading habits of his own countrypeople. If he went among the natives, their bloated faces would tell a different story; and if he lived a little way out of the town, where the police are less strict, the shrieks and yells along the road would shake his belief in the sobriety of his pet models. I am not now speaking of the mechanics and labouring men, but of the students and the better orders generally.

These remarks remind me of an anecdote which I cannot give without previous explanation. You will sometimes meet a gang of men along the road at work, or going to and from their task, under the care of one or two armed policemen. They are dressed alike in jacket, trousers, and cap, of a light grey colour, and of a sort of cotton or coarse linen. They are the prisoners who are hired out as labourers; part of their earnings is appropriated for their support, but a small sum is reserved for them when they are set at liberty. If you look narrowly at their legs you may see if this be their first offence or not. Their trousers are fastened round the ankle by strings of a different colour, and every time they go to prison another row of a fresh hue is added, and they may not tuck these decorations out of sight. Our landlord sent a set of three men to work about our house; some little article was missing, and we fancied they had got hold of it. "Not at all," said our cook: "they are not scamps, poor fellows; they are only poachers or murderers." "Only a murderer!" we exclaimed; when she explained that it was all by accident in a tipsy quarrel. The low, dishonest fellows were never sent out, and in our lot only two had had the misfortune to kill another. That very good-looking one, who had won our cook's heart by a compliment, had knocked down his sister with a chair, she told us, and the sister had died in consequence; and another had run a knife into a young man, but he was not sober when he did it, and he had got twelve months' hard labour; and that other man, who threw the tailor out of window, was to have two years, and a month's hunger kost—bread and water. But what right had the tailor to go courting his *mädele*? They came from her neighbourhood; and, to be sure, people had grumbled that they didn't get more punishment; but after all, they wouldn't have done it if they'd been sober.

. Now Anna is a very respectable girl, and I give her opinion as showing the general feeling about drunkenness and its effects. I do not think we could be more lax in England.

The great sore, the prevailing curse, in the whole of Germany, is the want of honour and chastity in the lower orders; and both—the latter especially—are in a great degree attributable to faulty legislation. In their dread of an over-increase of population, the Governments of the different states have thrown every obstacle in the way of marriage; the consequence is that two-thirds, at least, of the poor in their towns are illegitimate. As long as a woman continues faithful to one lover, her being the unmarried mother of two or three children does not entail the same degradation as with us. “It is a pity, a misfortune, a silly thing;” but it is no more: her mother, probably, did the same thing. “You see they can’t marry;” nobody thinks anything of it, it is such an every-day occurrence. If she be in service, all her mistress’s anxiety is to send her back to her own parish before her confinement, or she—the mistress—will be fined. It is too common an event for any one to make a fuss about it. Here one great barrier is withdrawn; from being unfortunate a girl soon becomes unchaste. Sometimes, when a man has scraped together the sum required by the authorities, he will obtain their permission to marry for the sake of legitimatising his offspring, but this is a rare event; more commonly he is obliged to leave in order to complete his *wander jahr*, and his victim does the best she can.

This *wander jahr* is another time-honoured folly, which cannot too soon be dropped. In the Middle Ages, when almost every town excelled in its own particular art, a handicraftsman, on finishing his apprenticeship, was obliged, before he could become a master, to go to the towns renowned for his trade, in order to perfect himself in it. This was his *wander jahr*. Inns were then rare, money rarer. His journey must be made on foot, for there were no conveyances, and he dared not carry much about him, exposed as he was to pillage from the bands of some marauding baron, or from the soldiery which then infested the country. The man who braved these dangers and hardships to learn his trade properly was deserving all praise and respect. He was not considered to lower himself by asking a night’s hospitality, or even a slight gift to help him on his way, and they were never given grudgingly; but that this system should continue, when its necessity has long ceased, is absurd. The boy leaves his master and his parents’ control at the very age when both are most necessary for him. He straps his knapsack on his back, walks off, and begins begging his way from town to town without the slightest shame or hesitation. In the towns he is obliged to work to support himself, but he never dreams of saving. He generally leads a life of low dissipation, just keeping clear of the police. He meets with the worst associates, and all his better principles are sapped, if not destroyed. When work is slack, or he tires of his present abode; he trudges away to another place, and recommences the same career.

It is all very well for poets and enthusiastic writers to talk of the "poor tired mechanic," and "the simplicity of German manners," but I know what we should say if a healthy, strong, well-dressed man were to come begging to us in England, with a pair of boots hanging over a bursting knapsack, and perhaps a watch-chain round his neck. They will knock at your door, if you live out of town, at twelve o'clock, the regular dining hour, and ask, not for a bit of bread, but a dinner.

I was once called to the drawing-room to speak to a "Herr," who introduced himself as an artist. "Would we like our portraits taken?" I regretted we had not time for a sitting. "Would we buy some views?" I was sorry, but we were not picture collectors. "Well, then, would I give him something to help him on his way?" I offered him twopence, and he took it.

The Germans themselves are beginning to see the bad effects of this plan, though they continue to give their *kreuzers* from habit. The police are very strict with the *Wander-Burschen*. They must not beg in the towns, and the gendarmes constantly stop them on the roads to examine the book they are obliged to have from their burgomeister when they begin their travels, and to take to the police-office as soon as they have found work in any place. Then their name, and that of their present master, is inscribed in it. They must leave word if they change their employer, and must give twenty-four hours' notice before their book can be returned on quitting the town. If all be not in order when the gendarme meets them, he makes them walk before him to the next prison, where they will remain till everything be set right. They dare not refuse to obey, or attempt to escape the policeman, for he always carries a loaded gun, and would fire at them at once.

Another task of the policeman in the villages is to look after refractory school children. Their being sent to school is compulsory on the parents, who are generally so poor that they cannot afford to lose their children's labour, especially in summer. They want them to gather wild flowers and fruit, which they sell in the town, or to collect wood for firing, or dead leaves, which they use as litter; and as the schoolmaster knows this, he shuts his eyes as much as he can to their absence; but if it be prolonged too far, he himself will be fined, and so he has to send the policeman after his missing scholars. If they have played truant, woe betide them! If it be their parents' fault, they will be punished unless they can produce some valid excuse, of which clergyman, schoolmaster, and policeman are the judges. In this manner the education of the rural classes is a very poor one; they are as ignorant, or it may be more ignorant than our own peasantry. It cannot be otherwise. One master has a whole village to teach, boys and girls; they come to him for about four hours a day, and are taught reading, writing, ciphering, and singing. The priest and clergyman come in turn to give religious instruction. The schoolmaster is so badly paid, that he is forced to eke out his salary by giving private

lessons to the richer among his pupils; therefore he does not tire himself too much in school hours. It is just rote-work; the children pick up a very little, not enough to give them any taste for learning, and forget it all as soon as they can. The singing remains, and it is pretty to hear them singing in parts as they stand at their doors on a summer evening; then one begins to believe in travellers' wonderful legends of Germany.

There is a roughness, too, a familiarity about the manners of the peasantry and servants, which at first amazes, but ends by annoying one. It seems a good joke when your new servant brings in her knitting, and prepares to seat herself by your lamp, when her day's work is over; it reminds one of an old book, and you think of a *châtelaine* seated amid her attendant damsels; but the dream is dispelled when she addresses you as "Mutter," and you find this unsophisticated creature anointing her tresses with your finest hair oil. Hand-shaking, too, is very common; you do not mind it in the beginning, only it argues a degree of intimacy which is not always pleasant, and then you discover that the peasant innkeeper who received you with such a hearty grasp can charge just as unconscionably as if he had bowed you into his *speise saal*, and you don't exactly like it.

After all, these are but petty blemishes, and I should not have dwelt so long on them had I not been provoked by the outrageous encomiums of people who just rush through the land, and only see the outside of the platter. That is clean enough. The Russians are not the only people who paint up their villages to meet a royal eye.* It is done nowhere more than in Germany. The people are a system-building race. They have excellent plans and rules for everything, but they are so shackled and tied that it seems as if all their voluntary efforts were endeavours to escape their enforced goodness. Their bodies and minds are less active than ours, and we have far outstripped them in matter-of-fact civilization. While they have been drawing up rules, we have been working on them, and should retrograde were we to put ourselves on a level with them.

But they have some things which we cannot equal—their climate and their lovely scenery. May they learn to enjoy them properly, and may a more enlarged contact with the world brush away the cobwebs which still hang about such places as this dear little town.

E. O'HARA.

* About six or seven years ago, when the Grand Duke was making a progress down the Neckar, the burgomeisters of the different villages along its banks issued orders that all the inhabitants were to appear in their best clothes, and wave their hats and handkerchiefs. It was added, that those who had nothing but rags to wear were to stay at home on pain of punishment.

PENNY READINGS.

It does not matter to my readers why I went to Stoneham, or why, going for one month, I should have remained seven. The results of my stay were, among others, many curious impressions concerning the habits and way of life of the inhabitants of Stoneham. This little market town is situated in one of the eastern counties, not six miles from the seaside; and the branch of rail that has recently connected it with a large though not lively city, has already caused some innovations and improvements. Still, to the visitor from the more wide-awake south, Stoneham seems sadly stagnant, not to say dull. Except on the market-day the streets are deserted; and here I have added an *s* too much, for Stoneham can only boast of that one street through which the high road passes from London to the fishing port of Y——. Short lengths of pavement alternate with places paved with those round, slippery, grey boulders that threaten to dislocate your ankles, and pinch your favourite corns, and beds of earth that a little rain turns into mud and puddles. Whilst I was there a dispute arose as to which of two parishes ought to mend nearly a quarter of a mile of path, which winter rains and snows had sodden into bog; and even after operations were begun they were carried on so slowly, that you had to walk over various geological strata, of stones, chalk, gravel, and sand, till the surface settled into a hard beaten track of upper earth consistency. Gas lamps were few, and at long intervals. I am not sure that these luxuries were granted to the townsfolk on nights on which the moon was warranted by the almanacks to be at the full, but I know that you were perplexed and dazzled by sudden changes from light to darkness, these beacons of civilization acting rather after the manner of will-o'-the-wisps to eyes accustomed to London gas illuminations. Yet, with all these shortcomings, Stoneham had one building of which to boast; not a prison, not a ruin, arch, or gateway; not a properly restored church, but a market hall. It stood nearly "foursquare to all the winds that blow," new, white, and substantial; and its uses were so many, that I only wonder what the townspeople had ever done without it. There were held the weekly corn markets, when the street was enlivened by knots of farmers,—big, portly, and jolly, or lean and grim; gigs, carts, and chaises of all styles; led horses, kicking ponies, and rough colts. Then the banker might be seen smiling at his door, as he exchanged news and civilities with neighbours come in from a distance; the inns woke up from their five days' inactivity, and landlord and landlady became realities, as they frothed the ale and mixed the brandy and water; and the doctor's wife laid out her hospitable tea-table at five o'clock, and welcomed her husband's patients with a smile across her best silver tea service. Once a week in that invaluable town-hall the good pastor held a short service in the winter months, when long evenings gave leisure to many a man to devote an hour to serious thought. The gas gave both

warmth and light, the benches were ranged so as best to accommodate sight and hearing, whilst a crimson cloth covered one of the business desks, and transformed it into an excellent extempore pulpit. A hymn, the Litany, a short prayer, a brief and pithy exposition of some parable, followed by another hymn, closed the service, attended by some forty men, women, and young people, who felt well repaid for the effort of leaving the warm fireside for the short trudge through mire, or snow, or keen frosty air, as the case might be. Here the young volunteers were drilled, and here they met to march along the high road to life and drum; here were held the occasional missionary meeting, or concert, Christy's Minstrels, or itinerant play, display of magic lantern, or other wandering exhibition; but the glory of all were the Penny Readings. In many a like country town the practice has now obtained of holding these readings weekly or fortnightly; a plan devised by kind-hearted men, who longed to see some rival to the public-house held out to the working classes, who during the four or five winter months have many idle hours upon their hands. The plan answered very well on the whole at Stoneham, and will do so wherever a few intelligent heads and kindly tempers bestir themselves to keep up the spirit of the thing, infuse a good tone into the selections, and divert in the beginning anything like ill feeling or rivalry into a peaceful channel. On inquiry I learnt the following facts from one of the residents of Stoneham. The readings were first established there in 1860, half a dozen gentlemen having met to talk the matter over and give it shape. It was resolved to give a series of readings once a week, at the charge of one penny for admission. In many places threepence is charged for front seats, and this is desirable in large towns. A committee was appointed to examine the subjects proposed to be read, with power to reject what was deemed unsuitable. The attendance varied from 150 to 300 or 400, out of a population of only 1,200. Dry subjects were avoided, though information given in a popular form was interpermed with more amusing matter, and the last piece read was always of a nature calculated to send the audience home in good humour. The tradespeople attended largely, and there were some mechanics, and some labourers with their wives among them. The aristocratic front seats, at threepence, were chiefly occupied by the higher classes, who encouraged the movement. Music was thought desirable to vary the sound to the ear. A chairman was appointed who introduced the readers, and on the first night of the readings he delivered a short address, stating their object, and inviting assistance from other gentlemen; for the public, we know, like variety and novelty, and it is desirable to have a good staff of readers. No extract was to exceed twenty minutes in length. Among the authors, I find, on referring to some of the programmes, were the names of the author of "The Ingoldsby Legends," Crabbe, Byron, Owen, Brock, Burke, A. Fonblanque, Macaulay, Turner, Rev. B. Power, Howitt, Blomfield, with selections from the *Cornhill Magazine*, *Temple Bar*, *Leisure Hour*, and

Chambers' miscellanies. The programmes for the evening were printed on gay coloured papers, and widely distributed. I copy one as a sample :—

Programme of the Public Readings at the Market Hall, Stoneham.
Thursday evening, Jan. 18. To commence at Seven o'clock, and conclude at Nine.

Admission—One Penny.

<i>Subject.</i>	<i>Examination—One Penny.</i>	<i>Author.</i>
"Benbow"	Crabbe.
"Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk"	Burke.
"Oliver Twist in the Workhouse"	Dickens.
"The Rescue"	Brock.

Music.

Our readers comprised the banker, and one of the doctors of the place, two schoolmasters, several upper tradesmen, and sometimes a few of the lower. Now and then a visitor at the place, or some notoriety from the neighbouring town, would "draw" the house. On the platform on which the reader stood, sat a few of the committee; and at one end was seated the Stoneham band, consisting of two or three fiddles, a violoncello, a flute, and some brass wind instrument. Truth forbids me to say that the native talent produced anything like pleasure to any musical ear. I have seldom heard a street band produce such vile discords, or persist so resolutely in breaking the time. As for the music performed, whether it consisted of old hymn tunes dressed up into airs, or the efforts of united native talent at composition, or the odds and ends of some unknown music belonging to some equally extinct play, it was alike without aim, time, or tune. The instruments could never agree in pitch, though they went through the fiction of being tuned; the fiddles screeched and screamed triumphantly in the treble, whilst the elderly violoncello slowly and equally grunted his part a bar or more behind; the brass instrument puffed away at notes that sometimes would not come at all, and sometimes came all at once with a rush; whilst the flute "obligato," like a peacemaker, sometimes sided with one part, sometimes with another, though, alas! failing to produce harmony. Great was my relief when a few simultaneous scrapes announced that the torture for the time being was over. Often, however, a song took the place of this music; for two young mechanics in the place possessed very sweet tenor and alto voices; and being very popular, silence ensued when they stood up to sing, together or separately, some one of the many sweet airs which have been given us by those public benefactors, though unseen composers, who must be collectively mentioned as Christy's Minstrels, or Ethiopian serenaders. These pauses rested the readers, and at least gratified the performers themselves. On one occasion two young ladies, staying with friends, kindly acceded to their host's wishes, and played a series of duets on the piano, the music being both grave and gay, to suit the subjects of the readings. In other towns it was not uncommon for amateurs thus to assist in amusing the audience by their musical talent, and to promote a kindly feeling between the hearers and more educated performers. Dickens was of course the most popular writer, and no evening passed

without one or more comic or pathetic passages chosen from his works. Hood's poems were also frequently resorted to. Campbell, Scott, and Hemans had a share of notice. The *Spectator* furnished more than one paper, cleverly contrasted with our modern fashions and customs by paragraphs from the papers or magazines. *All the Year Round* was a good textbook, and now and then an allegory of more sober meaning was listened to. For the style of the readers I cannot say much. One pitched his voice too high, and one too low; nervousness spoiled one reader, and affectation another. One speaker dropped his h's, another constantly mispronounced the long and hard words. But the effort to please always disarmed criticism, and I only remember one occasion on which a little shoemaker, in trying to give great expression to a poem representing a widow's courtship, contrived to be downright vulgar. In the year of my visit to Stoneham, the Christmas readings were postponed, from a feeling of respect to the sad national loss of the Prince Consort, and I can bear testimony to the universal deep sorrow shown at the time, even in this out-of-the-way town. Mourning of some kind was general even among the poor, and only one shop remained open on the day of the funeral during the time of the service: the Radical tradesman who kept his shutters down was not, however, looked on with a favourable eye, in consequence of thus confusing a principle with a feeling. When the appropriate set of readings did come off a fortnight later, they were well received; the celebration of the season, though damped by what had occurred, having still left a genial warmth behind. I do not quite recall any of the tales but one, though all taught the lesson of peace and reconciliation, generosity and kindly deeds. I was one of a party from the doctor's house, a man universally beloved and esteemed, but whose busy life could seldom afford even an hour's recreation from professional pursuits. Several young people and children were chaperoned by the friendly governess and myself, and the dear house-mother had made an effort to accompany us. The last reading was a tale taken from the *Welcome Guest*, the exact title of which I forget. The reader was a schoolmaster, short, sallow, with black, bushy hair, brows, and beard. The tale was of three poor West Indians left at school, when the others had gone home for the Christmas holidays; and we were fascinated from the first by the deep, hollow tones with which the reader commenced in these words,—“All the *other* boys.” Those words often ring yet in my ears, with the peculiar stress on “*other*,” that made them a sort of “household words” for weeks in that happy family with whom I then dwelt. The tale went on to relate how the doctor having marshalled the three victims to the usual service in a cold church, they were transported into the seventh heaven by an invitation given and accepted for them by the doctor, to return and dine with a worthy old lieutenant and his pretty daughter, who sincerely pitied their lone homelessness. Their drive in the dog-cart through the brisk winter air; the aspect of the house, filled with curiosities from all parts of the world; and still more the appearance of the dinner, consisting

of all approved Christmas delicacies, and the liberal supplies lavished on them, are related with infinite spirit; and the further account of the effect upon the happy boys of the generous host's wine, their consequent loss of the sense of time, place, and distance, their half-unconscious return to school, and the horrors of the next morning's feelings on awakening, and the necessary dosing and scolding, are detailed with a humour which was greatly enhanced by the reader's grave tones, which gave to the fun the contrast that might be presented by a sentimental bear or dancing elephant. On dispersing at the close of the tale, which was loudly applauded, we talked it over with great relish, when the dear mother, on our lamenting the absence of the amiable, social doctor, suddenly exclaimed, "Why should we not prevail on Mr. Shaw to come back with us, and read it to him after tea?"—that cheerful meal having waited our return. Instantly the two lads set off after Mr. Shaw, with a polite and pressing request; we hurried home to prepare the dear master, who, in slippered ease, was nodding over his paper; the mother made tea and ordered coffee, we took off our wraps, and in ten minutes were welcoming Mr. Shaw, who, solemnly pleased, was crunching toast and sipping a strong decoction of the best mocha. Little bursts of delight and whispers of favourite bits among the young ones having been crushed by the elders, lest papa should hear too soon; and much havoc having been made among the viands, and the tea and coffee pots drained; the cravings of nature after two hours' patient listening were appeased; and all our party being settled comfortably round the fire, the little ones snug in loving arms, the elders watching expectantly the dear master's face, which had assumed an expression half suspicious, half cynical, Mr. Shaw very good-naturedly again began, in sepulchral voice, "All the *other* boys," and gave us the whole tale once more, whilst our delight in watching the growing interest expressed in the doctor's face, and his thorough and hearty amusement at the droll parts, oozed out in sly pinches and squeezes of the hand, and interchanged looks. I can only say the round of applause given to Mr. Shaw at its conclusion was as genuine as that at the room previously, and he acknowledged it by the grimmest of smiles and bows. All had then something to say in praise of this or that part of the description, and with this genuine tribute to the magic spell of talent ended that day, and that, to me, never to be forgotten Penny Reading.

THE SCIENCE OF GOOD CHEER.

PART III.—ON DINING WELL, AND GIVING GOOD DINNERS.

THAT genial gastronome and active police magistrate, Thomas Walker, was wont to expatiate very pleasantly on the art of dining well and giving good dinners. It was clearly his favourite study, and he dignified it by the name of *aristology* (for dinner is *ariston*, in the Greek), and called those who studied it *aristologists*. This valuable art the worthy justiciary and discriminating Amphitryon was wont to expound with such extent of knowledge, such comprehensiveness of view, such soundness of principle, and delicacy of taste, that in his prandial—ay, and post-prandial—aphorisms we think we may safely rank him on a par with his contemporary jurisconsult and aristologist, the elegant and erudite Brillat-Savarin.

If, among the twenty golden maxims which served the latter as “prolegomena” to his varied disquisitions on good cheer, and, as he affirmed, formed an eternal basis for the science of gastronomy, we willingly endorse the fourth,—“*Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es*,” and the eighteenth,—“*Celui qui reçoit ses amis et ne donne aucun soin personnel au repas qui leur est préparé n’est pas digne d’avoir des amis*,” no less readily and fully do we admit the truth of our worthy magistrate’s dictum,—“Anybody can dine, but very few know how to dine so as to insure the greatest quantity of health and enjoyment.” Now, as there is a great deal of wisdom in these remarks, and as they agree in spirit with Lord Chesterfield’s well-known axiom, that “whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well,” we presume that no one will deny that dining well is amongst the things worth doing *occasionally*; at least, so thought Thomas Walker, and we must confess ourselves charmed and instructed with many of the *naïve* and “Original” revelations made of his domestic habits, of the care he took with his diet, and of the extraordinary success with which that care was attended. It was well remarked the other day, of this quaint and entertaining writer,* that “he does not appear to have been an invalid, but he wished for more than what most men call health. He wished for radiant, beaming, perpetual health, and he thought he had found the secret.” So he wrote a careful and accurate account of all he ate and drank, how he had it cooked and served, in what order he partook of the dishes that ministered to his well-being, and what was the theory by which they were each made to balance and supplement the other. And he tells us that he at last got into so perfect and almost unearthly a state of health, that “all impurity fell off from him, that his skin could not be dirtied, even if he did not wash it, and that his corns faded away like ghosts at dawn.” In order, therefore, that our experience may prove as

* *Saturday Review*, “The Search after Health.”

pleasant and satisfactory as his own, we will discuss a few of his peptic precepts on the important subject of DINING WELL.

Let us first take the following three kinds of dinners :—solitary dinners, every-day social dinners, and set dinners ; all three involving the consideration of cheer, and the last two of society also ; and see what has been said and what can further be said on this triple division of prandial refection.

Solitary dinners, we are cautioned, are, for good reasons, to be discountenanced ; and, therefore, the briefer we discuss that branch of the subject the better. “Solitary dinners,” remarks our worthy police magistrate, “I think ought to be avoided as much as possible, *because solitude tends to produce thought, and thought tends to the suspension of the digestive powers.* When, however, dining alone is necessary, the mind should be disposed to cheerfulness by a previous interval of relaxation from whatever has seriously occupied the attention, and by directing it to some agreeable object.”* Mr. Walker, unfortunately, did not go on to define the class of agreeable objects he points to ; but Theodore Hook, the famous diner-out, when *surprised* one evening in his arm-chair two or three hours after dinner, is reported to have apologized by saying, “When one is alone, the bottle does come round *so* often.” It was Sir Hercules Langrishe, we believe, who, being asked on a similar occasion, “Have you finished all that port [three bottles] without assistance?” answered, “Nay, not quite that ; I had the assistance of a bottle of Madeira.” To return to his Worship, touching *social* dinners—the pleasantest of the whole category—he truly remarks, “As content ought to be an accompaniment to every meal, PUNCTUALITY is essential, and the diner and the dinner should be ready at the same time. A chief maxim on dining with comfort is to have what you want when you want it. It is ruinous to have to wait for first one thing and then another, and to have the little additions brought when what they belong to is half or entirely finished. To avoid this, a little foresight is good ; and, by way of instance, *it is sound practical philosophy to have mustard on the table before the arrival of toasted cheese.* This very omission has caused as many small vexations in the world as would, by this time, make a mountain of misery. Indeed, I recommend an habitual consideration of what adjuncts will be required to the main matters ; and I think an attention to this, on the part of females, might often be preventive of sour looks, and cross words, and their anti-conjugal consequences. There are not only the usual adjuncts, but, to those who have anything of a *genius for dinners*, little additions will sometimes suggest themselves, which give a *sort of poetry to a repast*, and please the palate to the promotion of the health.”

Touching “set” dinners, perhaps the impatient reader may ask, How is a meal to be regulated in this present year of grace (1864), in order to unite all things requisite to the highest pleasures of the festive board ? On this head, Brillat-Savarin is singularly oracular and complete.

"1. Let the number of your guests not exceed twelve, that the conversation may be constantly general.

"2. Let them be so selected that their pursuits shall be varied, their tastes analogous, and with such points of contact that there shall be no necessity for the odious formality of introductions.

"3. Let the dining-room be amply and luxuriously lighted,* the table-cloth remarkably clean, and the temperature at from 60° to 68° Fahrenheit.

"4. Let the men be clever without pretension, the women agreeable without too much coquetry.

"5. Let the dishes be exceedingly choice, but limited in number; and the wines of the first quality, each in its degree.

"6. Let the order of progression be—for the first (the dishes), from the most substantial to the lightest; and for the second (the wines), from the lightest to the fullest bodied.

"7. Let there be no haste throughout the meal, dinner being the last business of the day; and let the guests consider themselves as travellers who ought to arrive together at the same destination.

"8. Let the coffee be hot, and the *liqueurs* chosen by the master.

"9. Let the drawing-room be large enough to admit of card-playing for those who prefer it, and also space enough for post-prandial colloquy.

"10. Let the party be retained by the charms of society, and animated by the hope that the evening will not pass without some ulterior enjoyment.

"11. Let the tea be not too strong, let the toast be scientifically buttered, and the punch carefully prepared.

"12. Let no retreat commence before eleven, but let everybody be in bed by twelve."

If any one has been present at a repast uniting these twelve requisites, he may boast of having assisted at his own apotheosis. We thus learn that the highest pleasure of the table is realized when the cheer is good, the wine genuine, the society well chosen, and the time sufficient for enjoyment of the whole.

After propounding these philosophic generalities, the practical question will naturally arise—to *neogam* hosts in particular, if not to others about to start in the social circle as dinner givers,—What sort of dishes, *mutatis mutandis*, go to the composition of "a good social feed"?—perhaps the best of all dinners. An expert in aristology, the late accomplished Earl of Dudley, said, "A good soup, a small turbot, a neck of venison, ducklings with green peas, or chicken with asparagus, and apricot tart, is a dinner fit for an emperor, when he cannot get a better." The experience of most people who have attained the *mezzo cammin della vita* will admit the sound and practical judgment of that hospitable peer. To insure a well-dressed dinner, provide enough, but beware of the common practice of having too

* "Il lume grande, et alto, e non troppo potente, sarà quello che renderà le particole dei corpi molto grate."—"Leonardo da Vinci."

much. The table had much better appear bare than crowded with dishes not wanted, or such as will become cold before they are partaken of. In the ordinary run of families, the smaller the dinner the better will be the chance of its being well cooked. Plain dinners are often spoiled by the addition of delicacies; for so much time is consumed in dressing the latter, that the more simple cooking is neglected. The elements, indeed, of a good meal are fewer than is generally supposed. Our "guide, philosopher, and friend," the metropolitan magistrate, observes that "common soup, made at home, fish of little cost, any joints, the cheapest vegetables, some happy and inexpensive introduction (as a finely dressed crab, or a pudding), provided everything is good in quality, and the dishes are well dressed, and served hot and in succession with their adjuncts, will insure a quantity of enjoyment which no one needs be afraid to offer."

One of his objections to the present arrangement of a dinner-table is thus forcibly illustrated:—

"See a small party with a dish of fish at each end of the table, and four silver covers unmeaningly starving at the sides, whilst everything pertaining to the fish comes, even with the best attendance, provokingly lagging, one thing after another, so that contentment is out of the question, and all this is done under the pretence that it is the most convenient plan! This is an utter fallacy. The only convenient plan is, to have everything actually upon the table that is wanted at the same time, and nothing else: as, for example, for a party of eight, turbot and salmon, with doubles of each of the adjuncts, lobster sauce, cucumbers, young potatoes, cayenne, and chili vinegar; and let the guests assist one another, which, with such an arrangement, they could do with perfect ease."

In what he says as to mutual help at social repasts, we most heartily concur. Among the practices which interfere with comfort are attendants handing round vegetables, and helping wine to the company. State, without the machinery of state, is of all states the worst. Mr. Walker relates that he once received a severe frown from a lady at the head of her table, next to whom he was sitting, because he offered to take some fish from her, to which she had helped him, instead of waiting till it could be handed to him by her *one* servant. It may account for the popularity of "bachelors' dinners," that there is an absence of form from them.

To order dinner well is a matter of invention and combination. It involves novelty, simplicity, and taste; whereas, in the generality of dinners, there is no character but that of dull routine, according to the season. The same things are seen everywhere at the same season; and as the rules for providing limit the range very much, there are a great many good things which never make their appearance at all, and a great many others which, being served in a fixed order, are seldom half enjoyed.

In entertaining those who are in a different class from ourselves, it is expedient to provide for them what they are least used to, and that which we are most in the way of procuring of superior quality. Many people,

from their connection with foreign countries and with different parts of their own, are enabled to command, with ease to themselves, what are interesting rarities to others; and one sure way to entertain with effect is to cultivate a good understanding with those with whom we deal for the supply of the table.

To illustrate precept by example, in order to show what *can* be done in this way in modern times, we will give Lady Morgan's sketch of a *recherché* social dinner by Carême, at Baron Rothschild's villa, some years since, and to which celebrated *chef* Miladi was introduced, she tells us, at her own request, by her hostess, in the course of the evening;—an affecting and instructive interview, no doubt—the *ordon bleu* joining the circle in the *salon* for that purpose.

"I did not hear the announcement of '*Madame est servie*' without emotion. We proceeded to the dining-room—not, as in England, by the printed orders of the '*Red Book*,' but by the law of the courtesy of nations, whose only distinctions are made in favour of the greatest strangers. The evening was extremely sultry, and in spite of venetian blinds and open verandahs, the apartments through which we passed were exceedingly close. A dinner in the largest of them threatened much inconvenience from the heat; but on this score there was no ground for apprehension. The dining-room stood apart from the house, in the midst of orange trees. It was an elegant oblong pavilion of Grecian marble, refreshed by fountains that shot in air through scintillating streams; and the table, covered with the beautiful and picturesque dessert, emitted no odour that was not in perfect conformity with the freshness of the scene and fervour of the season. No burnished gold reflected the glaring sunset, no brilliant silver dazzled the eyes; porcelain, beyond the price of all precious metals, by its beauty and fragility, every plate a picture, consorted with the general character of sumptuous simplicity which reigned over the whole, and showed how well the masters of the feast had consulted the genius of the place in all.

"To do justice to the science and research of a dinner so served would require a knowledge of the art equal to that which produced it; its character, however, was, that it was in season; that it was up to its time; that it was in the spirit of the age; that there was no *perruque* in its composition, no trace of the wisdom of our ancestors in a single dish; no high-spiced sauces, no dark brown gravies, no flavour of cayenne and allspice, no tincture of catsup and walnut pickle, no visible agency of those vulgar elements of cooking of the good old times—fire and water. Distillations of the most delicate viands, extracted in silver dews, with chemical precision,—

'On tepid clouds of rising steam,' —

formed the *fond* of all. EVERY MEAT PRESENTED ITS OWN NATURAL AROMA; EVERY VEGETABLE ITS OWN SHADE OF VERDURE. The *mayonese* was fried in ice (like Ninon's description of Seigné's heart); and the tem-

pered chill of the *plombière* (which held the place of the eternal *fondus* and *soufflets* of our English tables) anticipated the stronger shock, and broke it, of the exquisite *avalanche*, which, with the hue and odour of fresh-gathered nectarines, satisfied every sense, and dissipated every coarser flavour.

"With less genius than went to the composition of this dinner, men have written epic poems; and if crowns were distributed to cooks as to actors, the wreaths of Pasta or Sontag (divine as they are) were never more fairly won than the laurel which should have graced the brow of Carême for this specimen of the intellectual perfection of an art, the standard and gauge of modern civilization. Cruelty, violence, and barbarism were the characteristics of the men who fed upon the tough fibres of half-dressed oxen; humanity, knowledge, and refinement belong to the living generation, whose tastes and temperance are regulated by the science of such philosophers as Carême, and such Amphytrions as his employers!"

Brava, Miladi! most elegant and admirable criticism of a perfect repast by a perfect cook. But what does she mean, though, by "No dark brown gravies"? Does she really mean to say that Carême was guilty of that worst of modern heresies, a service made up of *entrées blondes*, a tasteless, soulless monotony of white? Then, flavour of cayenne and allspice! tincture of catsup and walnut pickle! To avoid such atrocities made a feature in the glory of a Carême!

The social element, as it is the highest, so it is perhaps the most difficult to secure on every occasion of a *set* dinner; for these things have their lucky chances, as well as most other human affairs. If the manner of presiding at a tea-table among the Chinese is an art punctiliously adhered to by that curious and persistent people, with its principles, rules, and instructions; *à fortiori*, every nation that prides itself upon its superior civilization should have a code wherewith to regulate the usages of the table, and daily keep it in practice. "Good manners," says Dean Swift, "is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse: whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred man in the company." "Perfect good breeding," remarked that *ursa major* of literature, Dr. Johnson—and who, by the way, did not always practise what he preached,—“consists in having no particular mark of any profession, but a general elegance of manners.” The courtesy and obliging disposition of “the bald first Cæsar” (by whom, remember, we are termed *barbari*) were notorious, and illustrated in anecdotes which survived for generations in Rome. Dining on one occasion at a table where the servants had, inadvertently, for salad oil, furnished coarse lamp oil, Cæsar would not allow the rest of the company to point out the mistake to their host, for fear of shocking him too much by exposing the mistake. Good nature is ever the basis of genuine good manners.

CHRISTMAS and good cheer in England are convertible terms. Long may they be so! What would jolly, rosy John Bull be without his

"cakes and ale"? It is possible, however, to have too much of a good thing on table, even at that "most blessed" and thrice happy tide. Boars' heads, "barons of beef, and kilderkins of mustard," were all the right sort of thing in the mediæval hall and monastic refectory, when all ranks met together; but those good old tokens of rough and uproarious oillity have long since resolved themselves into the dim distance of eld, along with a host of other notions. Enormous "barons," and "rounds" weighing 60 lbs., may survive in civic banquets north of the Humber, but in the south they are a tradition. Whilst advocating a tender and reverent treatment of time-honoured institutions, such as the feast days and other holiday anniversaries that are still the *red letter* days of the calendar, it would be better, we think, to retain their remembrance rather by adapting and varying them to the tone and habits and changing fashions of modern society, than, by attempting an absurd revival of antiquated customs, risk ignoring them altogether. Again we are indebted to the discriminating Walker for "a good idea" on varying the too, too solid fare of our Christmas regales. "Ordered," he says, "a dinner last *Christmas day* for two persons besides myself, and which we enjoyed very much. It consisted of crimped cod, woodcock, and plum pudding, just as much of each as we wanted, and accompanied by champagne. Now this dinner was both very agreeable and very wholesome from its moderation, but the ordinary course would have been to have preceded the woodcocks by some substantial dish, thereby taking away from their relish, at the same time overloading the appetite. Delicacies are scarcely ever brought till they are quite superfluous, which is unsatisfactory if they are not eaten, and pernicious if they are." Here we have an instance of good sense, novelty, simplicity, and taste, instead of that dull routine of "all the good things of the season:"—the result, a well-balanced dinner.

In our passing allusion to wild boars, boar's head, "crested with bays and rosemary," barons of beef, and other "substantials," which enjoyed so much favour in the coarse and cumbrous hospitality of the Justices Greedy of Massinger's day, we merely wish to observe, that though these *concetti* may be resorted to occasionally, by way of freak and eccentricity, they are no longer calculated to hit the taste or suit the convenience of the ordinary domiciles of the present age. Without judgment and taste, even profusion and magnificence may degenerate into folly. We will take a case or two in point, from the times of the banquet-giving Romans.

In the year 63 before the Christian era, the consul Marcus Tullius Cicero had just accused and convicted Catalina, and Rome, free from present danger, had forgotten all transitory solitudes of the past to welcome joyous banquetings.

A worthy citizen, excellent patriot, distinguished gastronome, and possessor of an immense fortune, of which he made the best use (at least, so said several choice epicures, his habitual guests), Survilius Rullus—such was his name,—thought of celebrating, by an extraordinary banquet,

the triumph of the illustrious consul and the deliverance of the country. His cook, a young Sicilian slave of the greatest promise, and whose mode of cooking a dish of sow's paps procured him one day a smile of approbation from Lucullus, succeeded especially in those eminent performances which command the admiration of the guests, and give new strength to their exhausted appetites.

Rullus sent for him, and spoke thus :—"Recollect that in three days Cicero will sup here : let the feast be worthy of him who gives it."

The Sicilian even surpassed himself. As soon as the guests had tasted the enticing delicacies of the first course, the hall echoed with a unanimous concert of applause, and the proud Amphitryon, intoxicated with joy, was going to ask that a crown might be presented to his beloved slave,* when the cook appeared, followed by four Ethiopians, who gracefully carried a silver vase of prodigious dimensions, in the shape of a large mortar. This extraordinary dish contained a wild boar ; baskets of dates were suspended to his tusks, and charming little wild boars, in exquisite pastry, no doubt—for never was there a more tempting culinary exhalation, —artistically surrounded the enormous animal.† Every voice was hushed; the guests waited in silence the most profound :—

"Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant."

The tables of the second service were placed round the guests, who raised themselves on the couches with greedy curiosity. The blacks deposited the precious burden before another domestic, a skilful carver, who opened the wild boar with incredible dexterity and precision, and presented to the astonished eyes of Rullus and his friends a second entire animal, and in this a third ; then came fresh delicacies, all gradually diminishing in size, until, at length, a delicious little fig-pecker terminated this series of strange viands, of which Rome, wondering and astonished, long preserved the gastronomic remembrance.‡

Man seldom prescribes to himself reasonable limits in the vast field of vanity and ostentation. At first it was thought an enviable boldness to have dared to serve an entire boar of a large size. Every one did the same thing, and at length it became quite common. It was necessary then to do better. One thought of having three at the same time ; another had four ; and soon the extravagant—and they were not few—caused eight wild boars, *à la Troyenne*, to appear at a single repast.§ The Macedonian Caranus, a man of spirit and of merit, placed himself at once on an eminence which baffled rivalry. He invited twenty guests to his wedding, and he had twenty wild boars served.||

Such magnificence, it must be confessed, is only another name for folly. But, alas ! has not every nation its failings ? Besides, the flesh of

* Athenæus, xii.

† Petronius, Sat.

‡ Macrob., Saturnalia, iiii. 13.

§ Pliny, viii. 51.

|| Athen., iv. 1.

the wild boar enjoyed an astonishing reputation in Rome and Greece;* and no one could, with credit to himself, receive his friends at his table without presenting them with the fashionable dish—the animal appointed by nature to appear at banquets.†

At length, however, they began to tire of this enormous dish; they divided it into three portions, and the middle piece obtained the preference. Ultimately they served only the fillet and head, the latter of which was more particularly esteemed by the Romans.‡

It was thus that our Saxon forefathers inherited this table custom of making the boar's head the first dish carried in with ceremony at a banquet. Under the Norman kings the wild boar's head was considered a noble dish, worthy of the sovereign's table. This, we are told, was brought to the king's table, with the trumpeters sounding their trumpets before it, in procession. "For," says Holinshed, "upon the day of coronation [of young Henry], King Henry II., his father, served him at table as sewer, bringing up the bore's head with trumpets afore it, according to the ancient custom."§

Another extravagant dish worth recording in a modern feast was one which figured in the "grandiose and sympathetic" demonstration of aldermanic good cheer at the far-famed York banquet, in 1850. Shortly previous to the realization of the first memorable International Exhibition, the Lord Mayor of London invited all the mayors of the three kingdoms to come and place themselves by the side of the august spouse of their sovereign, at a feast that should be worthy of such guests by its "delicate profusion and splendid magnificence." The direction of the gastronomic department was entrusted to that *chef of chefs*, the renowned Soyer, who doubtless sought nothing less than immortality in the composition, *more antiquo*, of the *plat* we are about to describe. The opportunity, he confessed, of producing some "gastronomic phenomenon," to use his own magniloquent words, for the "Royal table" on such an occasion as that York banquet was irresistible; accordingly the following *choice morsels* were carefully selected from all the birds mentioned in the general bill of fare, to form "a dish of delicacies worthy of His Royal Highness and the noble guests around him."

The extravagance of this dish," valued at one hundred guineas, is accounted for by supposing that if an epicure were to order a similar one for a small party, he would be obliged to provide the undermentioned articles:—

	At the cost of		
	£	s.	d.
5 turtle heads, part of fins, and green fat	34	0	0
24 capons, the two small <i>noix</i> (nuts) from each side of the middle of the back only used, being the most delicate part of every bird	8	8	0

* Hippoc., De Diet., ii. † Juvenal, Sat., i. 141. ‡ Caton. Censor., Orat.

§ Strutt's "Manners and Customs," vol. ii., p. 19.

	£	s.	d.
18 turkeys, the same	8	12	0
18 fatted pullets, the same	5	17	0
16 fatted fowls, the same	2	8	0
10 grouse	2	5	0
20 pheasants, <i>noix</i> only	3	0	0
45 partridges, the same	3	7	0
6 plovers, whole	0	9	0
100 snipes, <i>noix</i> only	5	0	0
3 dozen quails, whole	3	0	0
40 woodcocks, <i>noix</i> only	8	0	0
3 dozen pigeons, the same	0	14	0
6 dozen larks, stuffed	0	15	0
Ortolans from Belgium	5	0	0
The garniture, consisting of cockscombs, truffles, mushrooms, crawfish, olives, American asparagus, <i>croustades</i> (paste crust), sweetbreads, <i>quenelles de volaille</i> (strips or slices of fowl), green mangoes, and a new sauce	14	10	0

£105 5 0

"Wasn't that a dainty dish to set before a king?" Bravo, Alexis, my boy! In that veritable *tour de force* you devoutly trod in the steps of your beloved pastors and masters—Pliny, Apicius, Petronius, Athenæus,—and gastronomic folly was resuscitated in all its pristine glory. But peace to the manes of all such good fellows!

In the "Meditations" of his transcendental gastronomy, Savarin, like many other intelligent writers, sought to make the pleasant and the useful coincide. The "Meditation" upon *gourmandise* is replete with wit, sparkling fancy, and instruction. At set dinners it has long been a silly prejudice upon the part of the fairest portion of the creation to think it becoming to profess a total indifference as to what they eat. Let them taste this sugar-plum which the genial Frenchman would pop into their mouths:—

"*Gourmandise* is by no means unbecoming in women; it agrees with the delicacy of their organs, and serves to compensate them for some pleasures from which they are obliged to abstain, and for some evils to which nature appears to have condemned them. Nothing is more pleasant than to see a pretty *gourmande* under arms: her napkin is nicely adjusted, one of her hands on the table, while the other conveys to her mouth little morsels elegantly carved, or the wing of a partridge which it is necessary to pick. Her eyes become brilliant, her lips glossy, her conversation agreeable, all her movements gracious. She is not devoid of that spice of coquetry which women infuse into everything. With so many advantages she is irresistible, and Cato the censor himself would yield to the influence.

"The *penchant* of the fair sex for *gourmandise* has in it somewhat of the nature of instinct, for *gourmandise* is favourable to beauty. A train of exact and rigid observations have demonstrated that a succulent, delicate, and careful *régime* repels to a distance, and for a length of time, the external appearance of old age. It gives more brilliancy to the eyes, more freshness to the skin, more support to the muscles; and as it is certain in physiology, that it is the depression of the muscles which causes wrinkles—those formidable enemies of beauty,—it is equally certain to say that, *cæteris paribus*, those who understand eating are comparatively ten years younger than those who are strangers to this science. The painters and sculptors are deeply penetrated with this truth, for they never represent those who practise abstinence by choice or duty—as misers or anchorites—without giving them the paleness of disease, the leanness of poverty, and the wrinkles of decrepitude.

"Again, *gourmandise*, when partaken, has the most marked influence on the happiness of the conjugal state. A wedded pair, endowed with this taste, have once a day, at least, an agreeable cause of meeting. Music, no doubt, has powerful attractions for those who love it; but it is necessary to set about it,—it is an exertion. Moreover, one may have a cold, the music is not at hand, the instruments are out of tune, one has the blue devils, or it is a day of rest. In *gourmandise*, on the contrary, a common want summons the pair to table; the same inclination retains them there; they naturally practise towards one another those little attentions which show a wish to oblige; and the manner in which their meals are conducted enters materially into the happiness of life. This observation, though new in France, has not escaped the English novelist, Fielding, who, in 'Pamela,' gives the well-known instance of the manner in which the heroine and her husband lived, on the one hand, and the more magnificent, but less happy life of the elder brother and his wife."

When *gourmandise* becomes gluttony, voracity, intemperance, it loses its name and attributes, escapes from our jurisdiction, and falls into the hands of the moralist, who will treat it by advice; or the medical man, who will cure it by his remedies. *Gourmandise*, as our professor has described it, has a name only in French; neither the Latin *gula*, English "gluttony," nor German *lusternheit*, expresses it; and we recommend to all who attempt to translate it, to preserve the substantive, and simply change the article. The same has been done with *coquetterie* and every thing relating to it.

Considering the high privileges attached to the character of a gourmand, we are not surprised at finding that it is not to be assumed at will. The next "Meditation," accordingly, is headed, "*N'est pas gourmand qui veut*;"* and instructs us that "there are individuals to whom nature has denied a refinement of organs, or a continuity of attention,

* "All who wish to be are not gourmands."

without which the most succulent food passes unnoticed. Physiology has already recognized the first of these varieties, by showing us the tongue of these unfortunates badly provided with nerves for inhaling and appreciating flavours. Such persons have but an obtuse sensation; for to them, taste is what light is to the blind. The second of these varieties is composed of absent-minded men, chatterboxes, ambitious persons, and others who wish to attend to two things at once, and who eat only to eat. Such was Napoleon; he was irregular in his meals, and ate quickly. But there, again, might be traced that absolute will which he carried into everything he did. When hungry, his appetite had to be satisfied at once; and he was so completely *served*, that at any hour he could have fowl, game, or coffee, at a word."

The habit of eating fast and carelessly is supposed to have paralyzed Napoleon on two of the most critical occasions of his life,—the battles of Borodino and Leipsic,—which he might have converted into decisive and influential victories by pushing his advantages as he was wont. On each of these occasions he is known to have been suffering from indigestion.

Composure of mind, then, is absolutely necessary for good digestion. Mark this well, ye dyspeptics; and so may ever "good digestion wait on appetite, and health attend on both," to borrow the hospitable invitation of Lady Macbeth—a terrible hostess—to her assembled guests. Before sitting down to table, "first study," says our old friend Walker, "to acquire a composure of mind and body. Avoid agitation or hurry of one or the other, especially just before or after meals, and whilst the process of digestion is going on. To this end, govern your temper, endeavour to look at the bright side of things, keep down as much as possible the unruly passions, discard envy, hatred, and malice, and lay your head upon your pillow in charity with all mankind. Let not your wants outrun your means. Whatever difficulties you have to encounter, be not perplexed, but think only what it is right to do in the sight of Him who seeth all things, and bear without repining the result. When your meals are solitary, let your thoughts be cheerful; when they are social, which is better, avoid disputes, or serious argument, or unpleasant topics. 'Unquiet meals,' says Shakspeare, 'make ill digestions;' and the contrary is produced by easy conversation, a pleasant project, welcome news, or a lively companion. I advise wives not to entertain their husbands with domestic grievances about children or servants, nor to ask for money, nor produce unpaid bills, nor propound unseasonable or provoking questions; and I advise husbands to keep the cares and vexations of the world to themselves, but to be communicative of whatever is comfortable, and cheerful, and amusing."

Health obviously depends in a great measure on the number, quality, and quantity of our meals; and the grand point for dyspeptic persons is, to avoid hurry, agitation, anxiety, and distraction of every sort, whilst the digestive organs are at work. In confirmation of this the following anecd-

dote is related :—During the time M. de Suffrein was commanding for the French in the East, he was one day waited on by a deputation of natives, who requested an audience just as he was sitting down to dinner. He quietly heard out the message, and as quietly desired the messenger to inform the deputation, that it was a precept of the Christian religion, from which no earthly consideration would induce him to depart, never to attend to any business of any kind at dinner-time. The deputation went away lost in admiration at the piety of the commandant.

The true art in the economy of refection, says Ude, is “to partake at one meal only of as much as will leave the eater free to do honour to the next. The luncheon should not be allowed to supersede the dinner, nor should the appetite be reserved solely for the principal repast.” The hour of dinner, Dr. Herbert Mayo tells us, “should be neither too late nor too early. If too late, the system will have been exhausted for want of it, will be weakened, and the digestion enfeebled; if too early, the stomach will crave another substantial meal, which, taken late in the evening, will not be digested before the hours of sleep. A person who breakfasts at nine should not dine later than six.”

All gourmands have eaten at regular hours. Without punctuality, one is sure of nothing; your stomach fails you. PUNCTUALITY IS THE MOST INDISPENSABLE QUALITY IN A COOK! He must be rigidly precise as to time; for to him the want of punctuality is altogether fatal. Jay, one of the most brilliant pupils of Carème, refused an increase of one thousand francs to his salary, and a retiring pension from the Marquis Wellesley, from the sole cause that his lordship kept dinner waiting for one hour after the time appointed for being served up. Summoned just at the last moment of his expiring fire, the *chef* ought to have an interval of time for tasting the different dishes. There is no cook, no matter how delicate his palate, that can judge in such a hasty manner of the perfection of his handiwork, if he has not that interval allowed him. The sensation of tasting the preceding dish deprives the tongue of its delicate *gusto*. A good cook should also be a sober man; for without temperance he would never be certain of his work. His talent consists in always being certain. Excellent practitioners fail when either their organs or members are over-taxed. Sauces are the cook's pride, and they lose their finest zest if kept waiting.

The congeniality of the topic at this frigid season of the year disposes us naturally to be chatty about cookery and the classics of the table. But bear with us, gentle gastronomers, and pardon our garrulity touching the right enjoyment of the good things so bountifully vouchsafed to us dwellers on this round earth; for is not cookery the soul of festivity, at all times, and to all ages? How many marriages have been the consequence of meeting at dinner! How much good fortune has been the result of a good supper! At what moment of our existence are we happier than when at table? There hatred and animosity are lulled to sleep, and pleasure alone reigns. It is at table that an amiable lady or gentleman

shines in sallies of wit, where they display the ease and graceful manner with which they perform "the honours." Here their wants are satisfied, their minds and bodies invigorated, and themselves qualified for the higher delights of love, music, poetry, dancing, and other pleasures. Many people rail against attributing much importance to the pleasures of the table; but it is not observable that these moralists are more averse than others to the gratification of the palate, when opportunity occurs.

While dilating upon the repasts suited to the boards of the wealthy and the well-to-do, let us not forget to say a word as to what may be done towards placing, at small cost, good and wholesome cheer within reach of our poorer brethren. Cheap food and good cooking for the working man, we repeat, are data of a problem, the solution of which is fraught with immense results to the community at large. We have already spoken of the successful experiments in "cooking for the million" at Glasgow, Manchester, and other towns in this country, and we would now direct attention to what is doing in that way by our intelligent and benevolent Gallic neighbours in the south of *la belle France*.

In one of the faubourgs of the charming capital of Dauphiny, Grenoble, stands a well-constructed building, the head-quarters of the "Alimentary Association," or, as it is familiarly called by the working people of the city, among whom it is very popular, the "Alimentary." The ground in front is well planted with shrubs and flowers, and ornamented with jets of water tastefully arranged; the whole place having a peculiarly neat and pleasing aspect, which of itself is calculated to attract.

A few years since, some worthy citizens of Grenoble, the Mayor at their head, struck with the numerous inconveniences and dangers to which the working classes were exposed, in consequence of having to resort to inferior eating-houses (in the immediate neighbourhood of which wine-shops were always found) for the purpose of taking their meals, conceived the idea of a reform. Their primary object was rather to improve the *moral* condition of their poorer neighbours than to furnish them with any material aid. Instead of the smoking, the disputes, the drunkenness, the disorders of all kinds, which the well-disposed workman was frequently compelled to witness in these places, they wished to set before him examples of moderation and propriety; then, as a subordinate object, they wished to teach him to prefer simple, wholesome, well-prepared food, to the inferior and adulterated dishes to which he had been accustomed; and finally, in order to induce him to avail himself of *these* advantages, they wished to give him a substantial bonus in the shape of reduced expenditure,—a plan which, it must be admitted, wisely combined his moral with his material welfare, and which has already produced the best results.

One of the most striking features in the internal regulation of this establishment, and to which, in spite of its simplicity, much of its success is probably owing, is that each person attends to his own wants,—an arrangement which prevents all expostulations and noisy orders to the

waiters. Another peculiarity is, the articles consumed are paid for in advance; and thus those disagreeable discussions are entirely avoided which frequently arise where the contrary practice prevails; and the most perfect order and decorum reign throughout the place.

On the occasion of the visit of the writer to whose account we are indebted for these notes of the "Alimentary," "We had scarcely," he says, "entered the front court, when my friend exclaimed, 'Choose your dinner; yonder is the bill of fare for the day.' Looking in the direction indicated, I saw upon the wall a large board, furnished with sliding compartments, on which were inscribed in legible characters a list of the provisions for that day. There were two kinds of soup, four of meat, four of vegetables, and several sorts of fruits, &c., for dessert. This was a sufficient variety to satisfy all tastes; in addition to which, I was informed that there is a change in the provisions every day.

"Having made my selection from the list before me, we went to a wicket (which all are obliged to approach in their regular turn), and in exchange for our money, we received as many metal counters of different kinds as we decided to have portions. The reader will excuse these details, which are needful to explain the working of the institution, and will now kindly accompany us to the opposite side of the court, where there is another wicket, which opens into the kitchen. There, before a large dresser, which is scrupulously clean, the counters are exchanged for the various commodities which they represent; and each person, on receiving what he demands, goes and takes his place in a fine, lofty dining-hall, pierced with numerous windows, and furnished with a number of large dining-tables. When he has finished his portion, he returns to the kitchen wicket, obtains another, and then resumes his place. At the end of the repast he has only to retire, and a waiter forthwith clears away the plates, &c., and prepares the vacant place for a new comer.

"At the time of our entrance there were several hundred persons in the room, but there was neither noise nor confusion; conversation was carried on in a subdued tone, and every one seemed politely considerate for his neighbours. This was seen at a glance; for, side by side with working men, were seated, without any appearance of restraint or repugnance, students, shopmen, and even ecclesiastics. 'At Paris,' I said to my friend, 'the omnibus is the school of politeness for the working classes; but here you have one which I see is even more efficient.'

"The citizens of Grenoble have not contented themselves with barely founding this establishment; they have continued to watch over it with a persevering interest, without which its efficiency would probably soon be impaired. A committee of one hundred persons, chosen from amongst them, perform this duty in turn. Three of them are in attendance every day; one of whom presides in the cash department, while the other two walk about in the dining-hall and kitchen, listening to complaints, if there are any, and by their simple presence maintaining order and decorum.

throughout the place. Besides this precaution, the rules of the institution make further provision for the maintenance of good conduct within its precincts. For example, there is a separate room for the use of women; no person is permitted to have more than two portions of wine; and, in extreme cases, expulsion may be resorted to; but so far as I was able to judge, the presence of these two gentlemen, passing about among the guests, politely and assiduously doing, as it were, the honours of the house, is far more effective than any rules could possibly be.

"And now," continues our informant, "if, after having given this preliminary information, I may be permitted to refer for a moment to my dinner and its accessories, I would say that there was far more comfort and cleanliness here than in an eating-house of the second class; and if, on the one hand, there were no dainty productions of the culinary art, neither, on the other, was there anything but what was of excellent quality and well prepared. The managers have had the good sense to engage as cook a man who has had experience in first-rate houses, and who is acquainted with all the resources of his art. I was shown a general list of the provisions which are served from time to time, and I found that it included almost everything which we are accustomed to find in the lists of houses of a superior class;—all the vegetables, all the fruits, some twenty different preparations of meat, and even turkeys and fowls. I found the soup especially good; and as persons who do not take their meals at the place are allowed to purchase whatever they wish for consumption at home, a great quantity of it is thus disposed of. At meal times children may be seen flocking from all parts to the spot, in order to procure some of this savoury and nutritious food, which is very superior to anything that could be prepared by the poor at their own habitations.

"When we had finished our repast," continues the visitor, "which consisted of soup, fricaseed veal, roast beef, vegetables, and dessert, I requested my friend to inform me how much he had expended on my account. 'Ah,' said he, 'I would not have you suppose that you have dined as a workman would have done: you have completely ruined me, for I have paid no less than eightpence-halfpenny. But I will now tell you how, in general, men of that class proceed. In the morning they take one portion of soup with bread, and one with wine; at dinner a plate of meat, backed up by vegetables, and a portion of wine; and in the evening the same as in the morning—all of which things together only cost them eightpence.' And as I uttered an exclamation of surprise at the smallness of the charge, he added, 'This is indeed a great benefit, which results from the working of the Association. The expenses of the establishment are very small when divided amongst so many, and the provisions being bought in bulk, their quality can easily be checked, while, at the same time, all the advantage which arises from wholesale purchases is secured. The soup, which you have just pronounced so excellent, is sold at the rate of a pint and a half for a penny; a plate of vegetables

costs the same price; a plate of meat, with or without a seasoning of vegetables, twopence; four ounces of bread, a halfpenny; and a portion of wine, a penny. Our prices are invariable; but when the cost of provisions advances we make a slight diminution in the quantity of the portions, to make up for which our customers take an extra portion of bread, if the appetite requires it. In consequence of its excellent arrangements, the establishment is becoming more and more popular. It was my turn to make up the last quarterly accounts, and during that period we had sold no less than 255,000 portions, or an average of 2,800 every day, so that you see we are doing business. The numbers for the corresponding quarters in the three previous years were 160,000, 191,000, and 244,000, showing constant and well-sustained progress. Although the Association does not seek to make a profit by its operations, yet such is the carefulness of its management that there is always a small balance in its favour; and this has been applied hitherto to the improvement of the furniture and utensils—as, for example, to the purchase of the porcelain on which your dinner has been served.

“ ‘Thanks,’ continued my friend, ‘to the resources which our establishment offers, many families have quite given up cooking at home, much to their advantage in every respect. Instead of purchasing their necessaries at the market or the shop at a very dear rate, as the poor almost always do, the mother has nothing to do but send her children here to fetch what is required; and although she no longer cooks the dinner, she yet continues to spread the table the same as before. The household table, therefore, is not set aside, nor is the sacredness of the hearth imperilled because the kitchen fire is no longer lighted. It is by no means necessary that a mother should prepare with her own hands the food of her family; and if she is set at liberty from that obligation, she has, of course, all the more time to devote to her children and to her other household duties. Consequently, the entire well-being of the family is increased, and along with it the satisfaction which the father feels when he is surrounded by those whom he is bound to cherish. You may depend upon it that the inferiority of the provisions, and the badness of the cookery which he finds at home, have often driven the working man from the bosom of his family to seek his comforts elsewhere, and thus he has contracted many evil habits.’ ”

We may thus learn how much may be done by combined and well-directed effort, with comparatively small and simple means, to better the condition of a most deserving class; and we trust that its example may be extensively followed, not only in many other of the large towns of France, but in those of England also. Change the system of prevalent bad cookery, put the people into the position of getting at least one well-cooked meal a day, and they will rapidly improve. They will thus be socially and economically educated by a better state of things.

With an increase of material prosperity in this country, of which the signs are everywhere so startling, there surely should be a corresponding

advance in our social progression as a people. An intelligent study of the *science of good cheer* is a path of pleasant scientific discovery, and a progress to useful perfection. A little science goes a great way, and some knowledge and refinement in culinary matters might work miracles, not only in the mansions of the nobility and millionaires, but also in the houses of less distinguished rank.

A useful institution has lately been opened in Berners Street, Oxford Street, called "*The School of Cookery*," which, for a moderate fee, gives a course of scientific instruction to servants under a first-rate *chef*, and furnishes certificates to proficient or competent pupils. We may, therefore, indulge in a not unreasonable hope that ere long a family of the comfortable middle class may secure by such means, if not a female *cordon bleu*, at any rate a person instructed to serve up systematically and economically a dinner cooked *secundum artem*, upon recognized principles, instead of in the barbaric, slap-dash, happy-go-lucky style with which we have been (*horresco referens*!) too long unpleasantly familiar upon so many of our insular tables. For helpless bachelors, and those of the gentler sex whose avocations call them daily far from their solitary lodgings, a *table d'hôte* is already established, and about to be considerably extended, in order to dispose of the viands and *plats* cooked scientifically, for the instruction of the pupils undergoing a course of culinary training in the institution. Good luncheons of soup, and hot and cold meat, from twelve o'clock till three, at a charge of one shilling, and an excellent dinner of three courses, at six o'clock, for two shillings, are also daily served there.

In compiling these rapid remarks upon GOOD CHEER, we have been not unimpressed with the reflection that the true province of gastronomy is, by establishing the best principles for our guidance in the selection and preparation of food, to secure the conservation of the human race; and that it is thus intimately connected with medicine, chemistry, commerce, political economy, and especially hygiene. The contents of these papers consist of the combined results alike of our reading and experience of many good men's feasts. We have compiled with all industry; nor were we ignorant the while that small is the glory which awaits compilers after their death, as appears from the famous epitaph, attributed to Voltaire, upon a compiler,—

" Ici gît Mallet,
Il compilait, compilait, compilait."

Nevertheless, we confidently anticipate that our gastronomic readers will, now and then after dinner, give a toast to us "compilers," for our obedience to the precept, so elegantly expressed in the graceful lines of the gourmand who wrote,—

" Aux peuples attentifs dites l'art de manger,
Et qu'à votre estomac tout repas soit léger !"

S. M.

MISS PRIMWORTH'S BUTLER.

"My dear madam," said the vicar, "you should advertise. You should indeed. Take my word for it, there is nothing like it."

I took the vicar's advice, advertised accordingly, and in due course of time received several applications—more or less well written—from candidates for the vacant situation. The situation I speak of was that of butler in my own household. It was the first time I had had to seek out a competent person to fill that place. It had been filled—ever since Sophia and I were left, as spinsters, to set up house together—by poor Jenkins. Jenkins was a most excellent servant, whom we had known from his childhood, since he had been a page in the service of General Primworth, our papa, and had gradually risen to be his butler, and afterwards ours. But now poor Jenkins was gone, and it was necessary to supply his place, which was no easy matter.

At this time I was living alone in my late residence, The Grove, one mile from the thriving town of Chesterton. I was alone, because my only and elder sister, poor dear Sophia, had been dead five years. I was Miss Primworth then, a lonely lady enough, with no nearer relations than the children of a first cousin, once removed, with whom I am glad to be on kindly terms. These girls and boys (for such they seem to me on the score of years—young people were younger in my time) are very affectionate and kind. They call me Aunt Letitia, and I like the sound well enough. That is my name—Letitia Primworth. I come of a good old family, am fairly well to do as regards worldly goods, and am, as I have said, single. I do not suppose that I shall ever marry now. People call me an old maid, I dare say. I know the Miss Hetheringtons do, for I overheard them the other day tittering over the fact with Captain Spurrier, but I was not in the least mortified. It is quite true; I *am* an old maid.

The Grove is a solitary dwelling-place, though so near a town. From a terrace in the garden, which stands high, you can see the spire of the cathedral quite distinctly; but for all that the house is rather lonely and melancholy of aspect, one mile up the London Road. It is an old house, of dingy red brick, coped, dashed, and pilastered with white stone, after the fashion of Queen Anne's reign, and with lofty sash windows and a great overgrowth of ivy. There are many trees near the house, which make it shady but dark, and the large gardens are laid out in old-fashioned style, with broad hedges of holly and hornbeam, yew trees clipped into fantastic shapes, and straight walks, bordering formal lawns, in which stand tall sundials. A fine old house, but not cheerful in appearance.

I had a lease of The Grove. It had been a cheap house to rent, in consequence, I believe, of some ridiculous story of its being haunted by the ghost of a wicked lord who had shot or poisoned himself there, years and years ago. There was certainly some prejudice against it,—an absurd

one,—but I had never much liked the place, and should not have chosen it. It was poor Sophia's choice. She, as the eldest, managed everything at that time. And to justify her choice, I must confess that neither we nor our servants were ever disturbed by anything supernatural during our fourteen years' tenure of the house. However, a few months before poor Jenkins the butler died, robberies became alarmingly common in the neighbourhood, and caused me more concern than ever the ghost had done.

My establishment consisted of a butler, a page in buttons, and three maids,—the gardener going home to sleep at his cottage half a mile away. There were no very near neighbours. There was a public-house, "The Spotted Dog," a quarter of a mile off, and then came Widow Bramshaw's cottage; and after that you had to walk a good way before you came to the cross-roads, where our gardener and several other labouring men lived. So The Grove was thoroughly detached, and in case of thieves or fire, no help could be got upon the instant. There was, however, an alarm bell, which hung in a turret above the roof, under a queer, Dutch-looking cover, sheathed with lead. It had not been used, I had heard, since the panic about a French invasion, when old Sir Barnaby Poinder lived here, early in the century, and when the bonfires of Claybarrow Hill were mistaken for warning beacons. But when the robberies grew frequent, I had the bell dusted and oiled, and a new rope put to it—which rope came down into a sort of press-room where the linen was kept. And lucky enough it was that I took that precaution, as will presently be seen.

The new cord to the alarm bell was not all that I relied on in case of any burglary being attempted at The Grove. Poor Jenkins always slept with a loaded blunderbuss hanging at his bed-head, and a rattle on a chair within reach. Besides this, I had got Mr. Sherringham's gamekeeper to clean and load the old pistols that belonged once to my papa, the General, and I kept them in a drawer in my room,—locked up, for fear of accidents. I always thought that, if there were real danger, I could have found courage enough, for once, to fire them off. But with Jenkins and his blunderbuss, and brave old Neptune—who, though a Newfoundland, was the fiercest and most vigilant of yard dogs,—I had little fear of being compelled to do battle personally in defence of my property and life.

It so happened, however, that the robberies grew more and more frequent, and the audacity of the burglars increased, as it always does, with impunity. Squire Melkshot was robbed, and so was Sir Stephen, over at The Firs, and so was Mr. Peebles the banker. And though at Lord Guillemot's and Mr. Prestwich's the rogues met with a warm reception, and were fired upon and pursued, they got off unhurt, and were none the less impudent or active for the future. I therefore became extremely anxious once more to have a steady, reliable manservant to protect the house.

At last I heard of one who really seemed to be a treasure. He was a remarkably well-educated and indeed superior person in his condition of

life, and his name was Mortimer. He was fifty years of age, and had been always in good situations, and had given every satisfaction. His late employer, the Venerable the Archdeacon of Crossminster, spoke most highly in his praise. He, the archdeacon, would never have parted with Mortimer, but that he had obtained permission from the bishop to reside for the next three years in Madeira, for the benefit of his darling only daughter, who was in a decline, and ordered to that climate as a last hope, and the archdeacon, who wrote me—oh, such a nice letter!—was not rich enough to authorize his incurring additional expenses by taking out any English servants beyond his daughter's faithful maid. So poor Mortimer was left out of place,—the victim of circumstances.

I was so pleased with Mortimer's own letters,—sober, modest, and sensible,—as well as those of Dr. Folder—did I say that the archdeacon's name was Folder?—that I agreed to take him into my service, on trial. He was to come as soon as his last master's family left England, and he was to be on his probation for three months, to try how he suited me. At the end of that time, if all went on well, the engagement was to be permanent. I am one of those old-fashioned persons who have a dislike to changing their servants. Most of mine were of long standing;—cook eleven years, housemaid nearly eight, Jane, kitchen-maid, three, and the page four. Briefly, the Reverend Dr. Folder, and his wife and daughter, sailed from Southampton, and Mortimer came down to The Grove.

"Well, Miss Primworth," said the vicar, "you see I was not far wrong when I recommended you to advertise. Public press—air we breathe. Nothing to equal it in our century. And I don't mind saying I am very much pleased with your new butler. I watched him at church on Sunday, and never saw a more attentive parishioner, nor heard a better bass singer. On my word, Miss Primworth, you have got a prize, as servants go."

So I thought. In that matter I quite agreed with our vicar, Mr. Flinders, the incumbent of our poor and straggling parish of St. Nicholas-extra-Muros. Mr. Flinders had a sincere admiration for the newspapers, a feeling at which I have often smiled;—not that I am Goth enough to undervalue the press, but that I do not rate advertisements quite so highly as my clerical friend does. But in this case I was compelled to own that Mortimer left nothing to be desired. Such a good servant as he was!—quiet, active, unobtrusive, deeply respectful. I never saw such a butler, never! although I have visited at some fine houses in my day—Elkerton Towers and Poppleby Grange, for instance; but neither the Earl nor Sir Jasper had such well-trained servants as Mortimer. The man's manners were faultless; there was a suppression of self in all he did, and yet you could read in his eye the subdued sagacity of a very sensible person. He polished the spoons to a brilliancy that I must confess poor Jenkins never attained to. He was punctual, kind, humble, and a most constant and well-behaved member of the congregation at our little church

of St. Nicholas without the Walls. And he certainly was a very good singer.

It is no small proof of Mortimer's qualifications that he got into the good graces of us all, above and below stairs. Besides myself, who am not over fond of new faces, there was Mrs. Wilks the cook, always hard and cold with strangers, and Ellen the housemaid, who is a little tart in manner, and who did not agree perfectly even with Jenkins. But in an incredibly short space of time Mortimer was on the best terms with them all. He amused them down-stairs, I believe, grave as he was when on duty; but at any rate, his kindness and civility won their hearts, and Cook and Ellen told me separately what a very nice, well-behaved man and faithful servant—they'd go bail for it—was Mr. Mortimer. The only live thing about the house that did not take to the new comer was surly old Neptune, the yard dog, who growled and snarled suspiciously at the butler, and would scarcely permit Mortimer to come within reach of his chain. Mortimer bore this unreasonable ebullition of hostility very meekly. In a little time, he said, softly, the dog would know him better. Poor Nep! But I must not anticipate coming events.

Mortimer came to us on a Friday, and on the Monday following, Farmer Saltash, of Biltree, had his parlour window shutters cut through, and lost a silver punch-bowl, a teapot, some spoons and forks, and about eighteen pounds in a canvas bag, that had been put away ready to pay wages at the week's end. The Chesterton police declared that the job of cutting a circular aperture in the shutters had been so neatly done, that it was evident that expert London "cracksmen"—that was the strange word, technical, I suppose—had been employed. Nor had any noise been made; for, if there had, Mr. Saltash and his four sons, and the two men who slept on the premises, with double-barrelled guns and pitchforks, would soon have routed the intruders. However, this burglary gave us a new shock, and most of us householders took extra precautions. In this I found Mortimer a zealous ally. It was his suggestion that the bolts of both doors, front and back, were old and rusty, and ill fastened, and that new ones had better be put on the doors instead of them. And so anxious was Mortimer to secure the house, that he went himself to Chesterton to consult the ironmonger on the subject.

I may as well mention that I was particular about having the keys of both outer doors brought to me every night after evening family prayers, and of keeping them in my own room till breakfast-time. My papa, the General, had done so; indeed I believe, when Governor of some fortress, it had been etiquette for him to cause all keys to be brought to him nightly, and he had preserved the practice in private life; and it was my habit too. I had full confidence in every member of my establishment, but accidents will happen.

Now when Mortimer was superintending the workmen who put the new bolts on the doors, I chanced to pass by, on my way to call on Mrs.

Flinders, and I thought the locksmith a very ill-looking fellow. It was not merely that his face was smutted. I have seen very honest-looking persons with faces still more begrimed with oil and lamp-black; but this was a villanous countenance, with a fell of shaggy hair about it, and two squinting eyes that seemed ashamed to meet mine. I could not help calling Mortimer out into the garden, and desiring him to keep his eye on the locksmith till he was out of the house, as I did not admire his looks. But Mortimer mildly answered that the young man was an apprentice to Mr. Clench, of Broad Street, and had his master's good opinion, at which I went away satisfied.

I found Mr. and Mrs. Flinders much excited. There had been an attempt to rob the church. Indeed, the scoundrels had got access to the vestry, where the consecrated plate was kept, but had most fortunately been overheard, and an alarm had been given by the sexton, whose cottage was hard by. This sacrilegious attack had raised a fresh hubbub, and all Chesterton was excited and nervous. Timid people were hiring private watchmen to protect their dwellings.

"But you, Miss Primworth, with such a sturdy manservant, and a blunderbuss charged with slugs, have an advantage over a poor parson like myself, the only male creature in a houseful of women, and without a pistol or gun on the premises; not that I have fired one since I left college, but I envy you Mortimer, I assure you," said the vicar, good-humouredly.

All that afternoon and evening Neptune was very restless, and howled lamentably at intervals; a long, boding howl, that jarred upon my nerves; and I twice opened the window to chide the fine old dog, who had known me since he was a puppy, and who heeded my voice more than Cook's or Ellen's. So I opened the window and called out,—

"Naughty Neptune! For shame, sir! Lie down and be good, and don't make such a noise about nothing."

But if Neptune left off howling, it was only to sniff the air, and give a long, mournful whine, and then go clanking his chain, very slowly, back to his kennel for a while. The dog was thoroughly uneasy.

The last time that I chid the dog was a little before tea-time, and soon afterwards Mortimer brought in the tea. I thought, somehow, that my new butler's manner was not exactly as usual—a little anxious, perhaps, and flurried; though there was nothing at which a much more capacious mistress than myself could have taken umbrage. But Mortimer was habitually so very staid and cool, that a trifling alteration was more remarkable in him than in another, and I thought that there *was* a difference. He was more jerky in his movements, not so noiseless as to his tread, and made an unwonted jingling and clashing with the tea-things that did not seem consonant with his usual calm dexterity. However, I said nothing; but when the tea was made, I happened to desire Mortimer to pick up my glasses. I have good eyes yet, but I use glasses for small print, and mine had slipped off the table. Mortimer picked up the glasses, laid them

before me, bowing, and retired. When he was gone, and I was pouring out my first cup, I saw a paper on the floor, and picked it up. I quickly saw that it was none of mine, but must have fallen out of Mortimer's pocket when he stooped for the glasses.

If I had seen the paper an instant earlier, before Mortimer had had time to go down-stairs, no doubt I should have called to him to return and pick up what he had lost. As it was, I thought it not worth while to ring the bell for such a trifle. Mortimer, with the other servants, would come in presently to evening prayers, and then he could take his letter, or whatever it was. So I sat still, and went on with M. Du Chaillu's book of travels, as before. The night was very hot, sultry, and still. It was warm and close autumnal weather, and the heavy air oppressed my spirits somehow. Also—though I am as little given to idle fancies as most women of my acquaintance—the sight of that written scrap of paper lying on the table put me in a fidget. I could not help looking at it, and its presence annoyed me, perhaps on account of my aversion to litter and slovenly ways; but at any rate, I found it impossible to keep my eyes and thoughts on the gorillas while that paper lay where it did.

And presently a new fancy arose within me, a strange wish to go about the house and satisfy myself that all was right. It was not my practice personally to examine the fastenings; I always left that to the butler. But on this particular night an irresistible desire to see with my own eyes to the security of the place caused me to light my bedroom candle, and wander from room to room. I went down-stairs first of all. The dining-room shutters were all up, bells and bars in good order, and so with the library, the morning-room, and the rest. Front and back, everything seemed firm and fast; and I was going away, when I noticed a tiny lump of yellow beeswax in a corner near the front door, and half mechanically picked it up. My eyes fell on it, and I gave a start of surprise, for the wax bore the impress—not perfect, but quite unmistakable—of the wards of a key!

I don't suppose Robinson Crusoe, when he found the footmark in the sand, was much more horrified than I was; but I soon recovered my composure. That the impression of my door-key had been taken in wax, and for no good purpose, was clear, since I held the evidence in my hand. I remembered the villanous-looking locksmith whom I had that very day seen at work in the house, and I felt pretty sure that he had dropped the lump which I had so fortunately found. Most likely he was one of the gang of depredators whose actions had spread terror through the district, and had profited by the chance of being employed to secure means of access to a house that his accomplices meant to rob. I resolved, after prayers, to speak to Mortimer on the subject, and to consult with him on the best mode of averting the danger.

The rooms on the first floor seemed safe enough, the shutters being up, and the doors locked on the outside. I made a very cursory examina-

tion of the upper stories of the house, since without a high ladder the casements could not be reached. And no doubt the thieves meant to enter by the front door; that very night, perhaps.

As I passed the linen-room, I caught sight of the strong new rope of the alarm bell dangling at about four feet from the floor. Almost unconsciously I grasped the rope, and alight as was the force of my pull, it came away from its hold, slipped through the aperture in the ceiling, and came rattling down into the room, luckily falling on a clothes-basket full of sheets and white bed-curtains, or the noise would have disturbed the household. I never was so near screaming since I was a schoolgirl, for the thing was like a stroke of enchantment. A stout new cord to snap like rotten thread less than a month after its being put up! I examined it, though my hands trembled a good deal. The rope had been nearly severed, neatly sawn in two with a sharp knife, and had hung only by a fibre of the hemp. No doubt but that this had been done to prevent an alarm being given by means of the bell. No doubt that the person who did it was one who knew the house well, and had access to the upper part of it. And the severed rope had but one meaning, and that was treachery!

But who was the traitor? I sat down on a chest, and gasped for breath. I could not suspect my old servants, the cook and housemaid. The page was a good boy enough, of very respectable parentage, and well brought up, I knew. He had been four years with me, and had no low companions to lead him into evil ways, I felt sure. The kitchen-maid was a simple sort of girl, rather greedy, and clumsy with regard to breakages, but honest as the day. There was only one new member of the establishment, and *he* was such a steady, conscientious person, that it seemed monstrous to doubt him. And yet, if he were innocent, who was the guilty one? The rope had not divided itself.

I cannot tell how it was that I began to connect the severed bellrope with the paper that Mortimer had dropped in the drawing-room. To all appearance there was no link between the two circumstances. And yet I did connect them, for my next act and deed was to go down and see if the paper contained anything to justify my suspicions. I was half fearful as I opened the door that Mortimer might have discovered his loss in my absence, and repossessed himself of the letter. No; there it lay, untouched, on the table. I picked it up and read it, though the action cost me a pang somehow. I was a gentlewoman, you see, and had never before been guilty of prying into any letter that did not fairly belong to me. However, self-preservation was my excuse, and the emergency was a desperate one; so I read as follows:—

“DERE JEM,—If we don't look sharp, we shall get to Queer Street afore long. Old Nat, the fence, tipped me the offs to-day. Beaks is fly, and a swell from Scotland Yard cuming down speshal. He ~~nos~~ you, so this shop of yours must be the last crib we crack in these parts. When old cat's safe in bed, and all snug,

wave a glim 8. times in your winder, and we'll sport the deor. Lanky Dick can do the trick for the key. If the old gal screeches, you must stop hur mouth. Sparklers are all rite, and Nat buys the plait, as it's hevvy. So no more till 12. to nite. From your true pal till deth,

"THE NOBELER."

Scarcely had I finished the perusal of this dreadful letter, than the clock struck nine. At nine it was always my practice to read family prayers. There is such a force in habit, that on hearing the French time-piece on the marble slab beside me chime out its nine strokes, I rang the bell as usual for the servants. When I had done so I remembered that wicked letter; and the cruel treachery of the viper I had warned at my hearth; and shook all over from head to foot; less with fear, after all—though a lady is privileged to be timid—than with indignation and anger. As for reading prayers to that man—that robber, whose very Christian name was a lie, for he called himself George Mortimer, and the letter addressed him as "Jem"—I could not do it. How could I read sacred words to such a wretch? how address him as "dearly beloved brother"? how endure to hear his false voice giving out the responses with hypocritical unction? It was impossible; and yet I dared not denounce the traitor. I was alone, with only a boy and three women to take my part, while he was strong and desperate, and perhaps had his ruffian friends within call.

I had but three or four minutes to revolve these things in my mind; then the door opened, and the servants came rustling in.

"You need not stay, Mortimer," said I, as steadily as I could. "My head aches badly; I cannot read prayers to-night. You can close the doors at once, and bring me the keys. And, Ellen, I wish you to bring me the bottle of sal volatile you will find in the corner of the right-hand drawer of the black chest of drawers in my bedroom, and a wine-glass and a teaspoon. You need not sit up."

I began my speech without any thought of sal volatile; but I saw Mortimer, red and white by turns, eyeing me with suspicious scrutiny, and I added my injunction to Ellen as an afterthought. And I suppose the bait took; for when Mortimer brought me the keys, as I sat mixing the draught I was about to take for the cure of my headache, that model butler looked respectfully sympathetic, and stole to and fro on absolutely noiseless feet, closing the door after him in the gentlest fashion imaginable. Any one but the betrayed mistress who had in her pocket the letter in which this man was designed as the one to "stop her mouth" in case of her screaming for aid, might have thought him the most tender-hearted of servitors.

Half an hour I waited; and then, with a beating heart, I wrapped myself up in a dark cloak, very cautiously stole to my room, opened the disused door, well secured by bolt and lock, that led from my dressing-room to the terrace, and thence descended to the garden. I was most

careful to keep in the shadow of the trees, and to tread softly, but I feared Neptune might hear me, and bark. I thought it best to go straight up to the faithful old dog's kennel; as, when he should have recognised me, I had little apprehension of his setting up any noise which might attract attention. I drew near, but no growl reached my ears, and no chain rattled. I even called "Neptune."—"Nep!" in a voice not much above a whisper. No reply. The moon suddenly shone out, and I saw an ugly, almost shapeless mass lying half in and half out of the kennel. Can that be Neptune asleep? Ah! no; it was a sleep without waking, for the gallant dog lay stiff and cold, his limbs contorted by the death agony, foully poisoned!

The sight lent wings to my feet, I think; for though no great-walker in general, and though the road was muddy and dark, and the ill-lighted streets and lanes of the suburb were not too familiar to me, it was not long before I reached the house of the superintendent of police. A little maid showed me into the parlour where the superintendent, and a friend, a stout person in plain clothes, sat sipping their spirits and water beside a little table. Mr. Martin, the superintendent, knew me. I had once been to the magistrates' court to beg off a wretched little boy, all rags and ignorance, who had been caught stealing my apples, and whom I did not wish to be hardily used; and he civilly rose to offer me a chair, and to ask what he could do for me.

"You need not, Miss Primworth, madam, be afraid to speak before this gentleman. He belongs to the force; Sergeant Samuel Collins, ma'am, the detective from London. I dare say his name may be familiar to you, from the papers."

I had never heard of Sergeant Collins before, perhaps because I seldom relish the police reports; but I saw that he looked both a shrewd and a good-natured man, with twinkling eyes, and a broad, smiling countenance. My tale was soon told; and I could not help seeing, trembling and nervous as I was, that my professional hearers were to the full as much excited as myself. They examined the lump of tell-tale wax, read the letter that had fallen from the butler's pocket, and asked me a few pertinent and sensible questions. Then the superintendent tinkled his teaspoon against the sides of his tumbler till it rang again, and the detective whistled softly, frowning the while, and rattling the loose silver in his pockets.

"Now, madam, you seem a courageous lady, and a clever one too, and you did the right thing where a many would have fainted or screamed, and got their throats cut for their pains, very likely," said Sergeant Collins. "Will you be guided by us a bit, now? Will you let the superintendent and me manage as we think best, to checkmate those vagabonds at their little game, even if our plan's a queer one?"

"I will," said I. And I meant it.

I should think it was a quarter-past ten o'clock when I reached the superintendent's house, and told my story to himself and his astute com-

panion. The telling of my tale occupied another quarter of an hour. There remained the interval between half-past ten and twelve—for twelve, or about twenty minutes to twelve, was my customary hour of retiring to rest,—and I can assure you that the time was not idly spent on the part of my new allies.

At five minutes to twelve o'clock the two candles on the chimney-piece in the sleeping apartment of Miss Primworth, of The Grove, were extinguished, and I have no doubt that the signal agreed upon by the burglars was duly made. At twenty minutes after the stable clock had struck midnight, some one came creeping, shoeless, up to Miss Primworth's door; and behind him crept another figure, also that of a man who had pulled off his shoes for fear of noise, and tried his utmost not to make the boards creak as he ascended the stairs. On they came, slow and stealthy. Both wore black masks, made of thick crape that fluttered with their breath, and both were in smock-frocks, like rustic labourers. Yet the first was Mortimer, the respectable butler, late in the service of the Venerable the Archdeacon of Crossminster, and the second was the so-called apprentice of Mr. Clench the ironmonger—*alias* Lanky Dick. Mortimer had a dark lantern. Both had bludgeons.

Other men were busy below. In the pantry, in the dining-room, men were cautiously creaking about, dragging heavy furniture from the wall, forcing back bolts, picking locks, filling bags with plunder. There were three men at this work below. Mortimer and Lanky Dick had the rest of the task for their share. The jewels—valuable family jewels and heir-looms, which Miss Primworth was known to keep in her room—were the chief prize to be looked for, better even than the heavy old plate below. They were in presses and boxes and drawers. Their owner had all the keys, of course. It was but to frighten her, or—— Mortimer very gently turned the handle of Miss Primworth's door. Unlocked! So far, so good.

The old lady—the mistress of The Grove—was reading, late as it was,—reading in bed, propped up by pillows. Mortimer, as he peeped warily round the curtains, could see her nightcap and the red India shawl wrapped round her shoulders. She was intent on her book, and, possibly, drowsy, for she nodded slightly as she read, and she never even heard his approach, which was certainly most guarded and cautious. He turned, and winked exultingly at his follower. There was but one poor little lamp alight, close to the bed, and Mortimer drew up the slide of his lantern, darted forward, and laid his hand heavily on Miss Primworth's shoulder, saying, in a gruff and counterfeited voice,—

“Sorry to intrude, old lady, but there's a little business to be done. Where do you keep the jewels? Di'monds, pearls, amethysts, we want the whole biling, and if you'd keep a whole skin, you——”

Miss Primworth, for a lady, behaved with remarkable firmness. She did not scream, or faint, or go into hysterics. Only the shawled figure in

the bed put out a hand, and clutched Mr. Mortimer so suddenly and dexterously by the throat, that the ruffian sank, choked and gurgling for breath, on the side of the bed. And another hand, fellow to that which compressed the butler's windpipe, put a pistol to the butler's head, while the face of Sergeant Samuel Collins glared on the struggling criminal from the frills of Miss Primworth's nightcap, and the voice of Sergeant Samuel Collins hissed out the words,—

“Jem, my buck, you're nailed—in the Queen's name !”

At the very same instant that this capture was made, Superintendent Martin sprang from his lurking-place among the bed-curtains, and caught hold of Lanky Dick. Lanky Dick, though very much surprised, showed fight, and lifted his bludgeon, but was instantly knocked down by a blow from the brass-headed staff of a policeman who had jumped out of a wardrobe, and attacked him from behind. Mr. Martin put a whistle to his lips, and in a moment there was a rush and a stamping and scurrying of feet, and the sound of oaths, blows, cries, and violent scuffling,—which all died away in muttered curses, as the three men down-stairs were surprised and overpowered by the police concealed in the house. So well had the affair been arranged, that not one of the gang escaped.

I have little more to tell. There was a great deal of magistrates' examinations, and remanding, and records of convictions, and grand jury work, but the assizes ended the troublesome business, and I, Letitia Primworth, got for the last time into the witness-box. The robbers were all sentenced to various terms of penal servitude. Lanky Dick, who was a runaway journeyman locksmith, had five years given him by the judge. But the heaviest sentence, very properly, fell to the share of my precious butler, James Styles—*alias* George Mortimer, *alias* Trusty Tricks, *alias* half the “Directory,” I believe ; a most incorrigible rogue and old jail-bird, who had no more been in the service of the Archdeacon than in Her Majesty's Cabinet. His character and testimonials, it seems, had been written by one of the knaves in Seven Dials, who write begging-letters at seven and sixpence the dozen. But no great harm was done, and it will be a lesson to me for the rest of my life.

ATHENS AND BACK, IN NOVEMBER, 1863

BY MAJOR H. BYNG HALL.

At the period when King George IV. misruled over us, and King George I. of Greece was unknown, the people of England, who lived at home at ease, and read Byron's beautiful poetry, were led by his brilliant imagination to believe that Greece was a paradise on earth, peopled by a noble, high-minded, and chivalrous race, with an unrivalled climate, and scenery surpassing the charms of the garden of Eden. All these agreeable theories became, as it were, facts, by the writings of those sufficiently fortunate to be enabled to travel so far east.

The advance of civilization, or, more properly speaking, the advance in science and education, which has enabled the multitude to see with their own eyes, and hear with their own ears, has, however, materially changed the state of things. Reasonable men now begin to find out that a bright imagination, engendered by mere reading, rarely attains to practical facts; and have also discovered to their benefit, that there are skies as blue, and seas as calm, and people as noble, within reach of their own homesteads in merry England, as that in which the bright stars glitter over Attica, the waters of the *Ægean* Sea, or the specimens of mankind who are to be found in the Athenian city. And my desire in this simple paper, which I write in the capital of George I., in this, the month of November, 1863, is merely to do that which I have frequently done before as regards other places and other people,—to speak of them as they are, or at least as I see them, utterly ignoring the past, and looking forward, as every right-minded man should so look, with sympathetic hope for the future of Greece.

It appears to me that a traveller can best be useful to mankind by endeavouring to discover the simple truth as regards other lands and people, and by imparting that truth fearlessly; though he may err, however faithfully he writes, inasmuch as few men hear, see, or judge alike. The world has always enough of agitation and excitement; it is pleased with exaggeration, with passions and emotions, and with wild flights of imagination. I have no wish to pander to its taste; all I desire is to impart useful information and simple truth.

At the period to which I have alluded, a journey to the Athenian capital entailed great expense, considerable loss of time, and much fatigue. It is now as easily accomplished as was that of our forefathers from London to York. I am not a guide-book, and thousands have gone eastward, as I have gone, fifty times during the last ten years. But every year it appears to me that Greece comes nearer and nearer to England. And if the Greeks of to-day have common sense, and a pure, unselfish desire for the benefit of their country, and thus allow their young king—as I feel and trust he will—to gain the hearts of his people, backed by a wise and just Government; who knows but that Athens may become a Nice or a Torquay to those who

seek to pass their winter in a mild climate, surrounded by many pleasant scenes of interest of days lang syne? Only let the misty atmosphere of the past give place to the bright aspect of the present, realism take the place of romance, respect for what was good in antiquity lead to improvements suitable to the age in which we live, and Greece may still be the Greece many imagine it, and all must desire it, to be.

The manhood of Greece are a highly intellectual and fine race, both physically and mentally; perhaps, indeed, one of their greatest errors, or I should say, drawbacks, is their love of literature, and thirst for knowledge and education, not based on truth; in fact, an education misplaced and misdirected. The knowledge of ancient time and history is rarely faultless; all the knowledge of what a country has been will hardly tend to make it what it ought to be and might be. It is only by practically weighing the errors of the past with the necessities of the present, and by avoiding the one and endeavouring to provide for the other, that improvement can be achieved; and it is simply this which is wanting in the education of modern Greece. Thus you will find hundreds of young men who can tell you all about Alcibiades and Miltiades, and a host of great poets and statesmen, heroes and philosophers, yet who are worthless as architects, or engineers, or road-makers, or counting-house clerks,—places fitted suitably to the position in which they have been born and bred; who walk idly about the streets in fine embroidered jackets and white tunics,—the washing of which must cost them an income,—without the means of paying for them, exhibiting their handsome persons, clamorous for every place which Government has to dispose of; and if none are vacant, wondering why they are not provided for;—in plain words, believing that God created Greece to maintain Greeks, without an endeavour on their part to place before the world the undoubted resources which Greece possesses.

And now let me tell those who desire to be presented to George I., how best to get to Athens.

We are in Paris. It is a very pleasant city, as all must admit, for a short sojourn; more particularly so to the lovers of fine arts,—to those who have the good taste to believe in the art of gastronomy, and to the common pleasure-seeker. From thence there are three routes open to the capital of Greece. The one, *via* Marseilles, thence by the Messagerie Imperial steamers, through the interesting Straits of Bonafacio to Messina, thence across the Adriatic Gulf to Cape Matapan, leaving the island of Cerigo on the right, round Cape Engelo, through the Ægean Sea to the Piræus or port of Athens. The next, by the way of Maçon to St. Michael by railway, over the Mont Cenis to Turin and Ancona, and thence by Austrian Lloyd's steamer, touching at Corfu. And thirdly, the tourist may go by Turin or Vienna to Trieste, and thence also by the before-mentioned line of steamers, either way, first or last. With decent weather, the journey is accomplished in about six days and eight nights.

Now as regards the first of these routes, to those who love the sea—and

I confess I do not,—and who have, moreover, stomachs capable of contending with greasy and disgustingly “bad” French cookery—the worst in the world, if so be that a first-rate French artist with good material is the best,—I must admit there is much interest, particularly to those who have never previously travelled by that line. The railway (express) from Paris to Marseilles, in sixteen hours, is all of comfort that the most unreasonable man can desire; and the country through which it passes, more particularly after leaving Lyons, is highly agreeable, in parts charming. Even if haste be the object, you may leave Paris by the 7.45 p.m. train, and reach Marseilles at noon on the following day, and you have three or four hours to run over that which is fast becoming one of the finest commercial cities in Europe. The Messagerie steamers, particularly those which carry the mails for Constantinople, touching at the Piræus, are large, well commanded, airy, and commodious. It is well, however, not to carry too good an appetite on board; such being the case, you must content yourself with bonbons and apples, or greasy baked dishes, served at a table which for display is equal to two-thirds of the *table d’hôtes* of Continental hotels. The commissariat, in fact, on board all these vessels, though some are unquestionably better than others, is miserably economical, insufficient, and bad, and quite unworthy the company and the directors. If you suffer from the sea you will do very well: there are bread, brandy, and lemons, all good. May I also beg that you will not be carried away with the general and poetical idea that the Mediterranean is a millpond? True is it that I have gone from Marseilles to Constantinople, even in midwinter-time, with a calm sea throughout the voyage, commencing on Saturday at 4 p.m., and terminating on the following Saturday at daylight,—*calme plat*, as the French term it. Equally true is it that I have met with seas, which, if not precisely such as we expect upon the vast waters of the Atlantic, are far more trying to weak nerves combined with a weak inward man.

The Straits of Messina, weather being tolerable, are generally entered between Scylla and Charybdis, on the Monday night subsequent to that of leaving Marseilles; and the steamer remains at Messina till noon or later on the following day, so that there is quite sufficient time to enjoy a few hours on shore, and see all that is there worthy of being seen. The only objects of real interest are the ancient cathedral, all but destroyed by earthquakes; the far more interesting chapel and the convent of St. Gregoria; and a fountain in the Place de Cathédrale, happily recently restored, though only partially,—one of the most beautiful objects as a fountain, to my taste, at least, that I ever beheld; though I believe I have seen two-thirds of the fountains in Europe.

The Straits, weather being clear, which it rarely is in that mountainous district, are singularly beautiful. Beautiful is not, however, quite the word; for, alike on the Italian shore as on that of Sicily, there is an utter want of those magnificent trees and woodlands which hang over the very shores of our beautiful Devonian sea, and are in England so

luxuriant, making even the flattest county replete with charms. Moreover, for one month in late spring or early summer time only do you behold the verdure, which touches the heart with fresh and renewed hopes of the coming summer. From Messina, eight hours of courteous weather, and you land at the Piræus. Modern Piræus is a newly born town. I have nothing to say as regards its eldest brother of other days. It may be justly termed, and it is in fact, the port of Athens, not large, but safe and deep, capable of containing many line-of-battle ships. As I sit writing in the Athenian capital, on this the fifth day of November, celebrated in all England for Guy Fawkes, and in my boyhood sometimes ushered in with a frost or snow—with my window wide open, looking over an olive vale, with Hymettus and Parnassus in the distance,—three of England's magnificent men-of-war, commanded by Admirals Stuart and Yellerton, lie calmly at anchor there, together with various other French and Russian ships of war, with guns enough to blow the modern city to atoms. At the Piræus, as elsewhere, however, in Greece, the past is everything, the present nothing. True, many improvements were made there, chiefly by the French during the Crimean army of occupation, and far more might be made. If so, however, Greece would realize a fact, instead of for ever dwelling on a flattering tale. *Du reste*, there are few remains of antiquity, save a portion of the Roman road, supposed, in other days, to have connected the port with Athens, from whence to the city is a flat road, about four miles long, lined by small houses, a road that is all dust in summer, and all mud in winter-time. Railways innumerable have been projected over this short distance by English companies and French companies, but hitherto, as has been the case with everything tending to utility and civilization, they have come, to use a vulgar expression, to grief, or vanished in smoke; and yet the land is so flat that the labour would be comparatively trifling, and the outlay one which would meet with an ample return. In fact, the field for improvement in Greece is so wide, and the advantages to the revenue as to the resources and benefit of the country so great, so eminent, that all who have the slightest love for Greece must join in the hope they will now be commenced in good earnest.

I am at Athens. The modern city—still building—stands almost in the centre of the plain of Attica, between Cephissus and Ilissus (in Greece called rivers, in plain English, mountain streams, the beds of which are for the most part dry in summer), at the foot of Mount Lycabettus, and the rock on which stands the certainly magnificent ruins of the Acropolis. The ground occupied by men from Athens, to the north of this rock, in no manner belonged to the ancient city of luxury and sin, vices which the lapse of years has not yet erased from the blood of the present generation; and thus, as I have said, the past is the poison which has for ever withered up the present.

There is literally nothing in the modern city of Athens itself to call forth interest or remark. The houses are by no means picturesque or good; they are, for the most part, merely square boxes with flat roofs, door, and windows, while the rent demanded for them is enormous. The streets are, with few exceptions, narrow and ill-kept, with here and there an unfinished edifice, or a crumbling modern ruin, and inhabited by 40,000 beings, among whom number many foreigners.

The new cathedral, of Byzantine structure, is neither impressive without nor interesting within; it is a combination, in fact, of gaudy colours and bad taste. The one solitary and insignificant relic of the past—equally Byzantine—is, I am told, converted into a museum. But what it contains I have been unable as yet to discover. The palace in which George I. now lives and reigns, at the foot of Mount Lycabettus, at the extremity of a street called Hermes Street, is a vast quadrangular building, faced, if not entirely built of Pentelium marble, of heavy and monotonous style, a lasting monument of Bavarian vanity, folly, and extravagance, commenced by King Otho in 1836, and terminated in 1843, a palace quite incompatible with the resources of the country or the wants of the sovereign. It looks south, with an Ionic portico, the only portion of it that is not hideous as a building. That part of the palace occupied by the sovereign has a pleasant view over that which, in Otho's time, was called the Queen's garden, the care of which was perhaps one, if not the only wise act of her Majesty's *sojour* on Grecian land, though even here she managed to give great offence, and not without reason, by cutting off the water communication which supplied a portion of the city, in order to refresh her flower-beds. It has not perhaps all the floral beauties of an English garden, which it is intended to represent; but the deep shades of its varied shrubs and evergreens are highly pleasant, for these are the only trees, save stunted olives, in or about Athens; and when the golden coloured oranges, which are abundant, become ripe, the garden is worthy of admiration, the more so that the great want of water and the slight rains throughout many months of the year make it almost impossible to create those verdant leaves, our pride in England.

The apartments, of which there are far too many—for it is understood that his present Majesty does not propose to be surrounded, as his predecessor was, with a hundred lazy and expensive vagabonds, who would be far better employed in road-making,—are little worthy of notice. The ball-room, decorated in the Pompeian style, lights up well, and is perhaps the only really handsome room in the palace.

Altogether, modern Athens, save in the imagination of those who have never dined at the Table d'Hôte d'Angleterre, or bathed in the Sea of Salamis, is a city without interest or architectural beauty of any kind, though the ruins of the Acropolis—charming when looked on in the glow of sunset, or when the moon lights the heavens, at all times the most interest-

ing feature of Athens, seen daily, hourly, by every citizen who quits his home—offer a striking illustration of what has been.

Within twenty yards of the spot where I now pen these lines, there stands the bank, a large, square building, painted light green, looking over the Vale of Attica. Whether it contains any available cash, or whatever the peculiar object of the “patriots” who assailed it, I will not presume to assert; but this fact is evident to all who have eyes to behold,—not a half a yard square of the whole southern side of the house but is marked with bullet holes, like plums in a pudding. Is this the work of “patriots” and lovers of peace? If so be it is, I deplore the position of the amiable young King who has come to reign over them, and I deem it would have been mere common sense and courtesy to whitewash and plaster the exterior of the building ere he arrived. Happily, no shot entered the cash-box, no bullet killed the cashier or his clerks; nevertheless, it is very evident that the object of the rioters, or mob, or whatever they may be termed, had nothing whatever to do with the constitution or the good of the country, but that they were simply looking out for their own interests and plunder.

This bank is for the moment carefully watched over by English and French marines, who relieve one another on guard. It is, indeed, somewhat curious to look on these marines drilling every morning on ground where, possibly, some Grecian hero might have marshalled his men in the fight at Marathon. They are now relieving and marching beneath my window, and even the moral effect of their uniform has its weight, though I confess it is sad to see such necessities on Grecian land. The liberal people of England would, no doubt, prick up their ears and cry out loudly about the constitution and rights of the people; yet were I King George the First, I would inaugurate my rule by sending some hundreds of these lazy patriots in white petticoats to make and mend the roads, and till the ground, instead of smoking cigarettes in idleness.

The much-vaunted plain of Attica—at least, that portion of it looked on from Athens—is simply an ill-cultivated, wide, sandy flat, hemmed in by Mounts Parnassus and Hymettus. There are vines which yield excellent grapes, and olive woods which produce indifferent oil; but the whole scene, even under the most agreeable auspices of bright blue skies and balmy atmosphere, is utterly wanting in that verdant luxuriance and striking beauty afforded by the noble old trees and rich cultivation so peculiar to our native isle. In fact, the much-vaunted charms of modern Greece consist solely of the pure outlines of the mountains, and the clear atmosphere, which casts a violet hue over the whole scene on a fine summer or autumnal evening, causing an air of great repose.

For the most part, travellers behold the country under such auspices; but to those who reside there, or who may have chanced to visit Attica at all seasons of the year, the picture is not so pleasant. Bleak winds come rushing down from the mountains, cutting the heart of man out, while

there are few of those comforts within which make our English homes so cozy; and when it does rain, which is seldom, I admit, you may simply fancy that the *Ægean* Sea is turned upside down on the plains of Attica, converting the roads into rivers or mud pools, and, for the nonce, washing away the dust with which, eight months in the year, vegetation is thickly encrusted.

Hymettus, celebrated for its honey, is bare of all trees; but in spring-time its slopes are profusely covered with bright flowers and aromatic plants, on which the bees feast, and which give a certain flavour to the honey, to be bought in London, as at Athens, somewhat cheaper in the former place than the latter; but many English travellers buy Dresden china, old or modern, simply because it is Dresden china, and in the same spirit Hymettus honey is bought for the sake of its classic fame; though that produced by English bees on the hills of Berkshire and Hampshire, and stored in many a cottage hive, is infinitely superior. Parnassus, on which Hymettus looks, is simply a high hill—scarcely a mountain—once well covered with blackthorn copses; but if half the walking-sticks and other relics which are sold as the produce of these copses are genuine, all I can say is, those blackthorns must long since have been exhausted, or their growth, even in such a climate, must be marvellous.

In fact, Athens, with its history of the past, offers but painful truths in its practical history of the present; while its inhabitants, like those of the whole of Greece, ever dwelling on what has been, appear to neglect *à toto* the offered advantages of what might be, with apparent little care for the future, save where it touches self-interest.

But a new era has now arrived. Who, with a right spirit, that will not hope for the best? Oh that Greeks would let bygones be bygones, ungenial as the expression may be, and take to heart and hand what God still offers them, bearing in mind that He has already granted them a fine climate, a fertile soil, an intellectual people!

But now the cannons roar from the splendid battle-ships of France and England, anchored in the harbour of the Piræus. King George the First has landed,—landed on the shores of his future kingdom,—and has been received with every outward show of welcome, and with loud peals of joyous acclamation. He meets the authorities assembled to do him honour and bid him welcome, with a youthful and most pleasing countenance, backed by a most courteous, friendly, and high-toned manner; indeed, there is something peculiarly sympathetic in his bearing, while his gentle and intellectual face ought to, and doubtless does, inspire confidence. The Grecian people meet him with gladness and seeming affection. Tired of revolutions and bloodshed, and anarchy and idleness, they must be, they are, desirous of peace and repose. Let the sword be turned into the ploughshare, theory give place to practice, the love of luxury and idleness to labour, and those blessings may still be theirs.

The first act of the king, simple though the tale, was one of grace and

kindness. A poor barber, a native of Corfu, excited by loyalty, we will say, ran after his Majesty's carriage, shouting in English, "My king! my prince!—I will give my life for my king!" and the king kindly ordered him to the palace, and desired that the position of the man should be made known to him; and if he be not ere this the king's private barber, he has doubtless permission to hang over his shop door, "Barber to George the First of Greece"—which, though I scarcely intend to perpetrate an absurd pun, will enable him to sell more "grease" and shave more chins than he has ever done heretofore.

He drives to the seat of royalty, the capital of Athens, and descends at the palace where Otho lived and his Queen reigned,—a palace built by Bavarian bad taste, ostentation, and useless extravagance. The young king may have been half strangled with dust in the course of that royal progress; but as he drove through triumphal arches of pine wood, erected in far better taste than any of the modern Athenian buildings, he had at least the pleasing knowledge that no voice was raised in the assembled crowd save to do him honour and give him welcome. Upon the day following he gave an all but *impromptu* banquet, at which he received the ministers, past and present, the heads of diplomatic corps, admirals and superior officers of the fleets of all nations, and many others whose personal feelings may not perhaps have been all *couleur de rose* towards him, but whom, by his courtesy of manner and amiable greeting, he sent away as friends.

Since then he has again received guests on the birthday of our Prince of Wales, and he drives and walks about in the simple attire of a gentleman, unattended by humbug or escorts. He has changed his ministry. I am not writing politics,—it is not my province,—but I think the new Government leans somewhat too much towards Paris. We shall see. Meanwhile, young King George has a handful of trumps. God give him the power and the will to play them wisely! though it will be a difficult game, if knaves are to be counted as the highest cards in the pack. Prudence ought to be his ace of hearts, and lead his affections; temperance his ace of diamonds, presiding over his measures and pleasures; his ace of clubs, justice; and modest fortitude his ace of spades.

"If knaves are the highest trumps, kings are of little avail;" so says some pleasant writer,—though possibly not precisely in those words,—and I agree with him.

Report says that it is his Majesty's intention to remodel and reorganize the Grecian army, if an army it can be called. Its principal use—if it has any use at all—appears to me to be that of watching over the internal tranquillity of the country. Hitherto it has taken a totally opposite course.

I believe that I am not incorrect in stating that the army, on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, was formerly in a great measure composed of ancient bands of brigands, who were employed to

put down their former comrades. In accordance, however, with the assertion of Voltaire, "*On a du goût pour son premier métier,*" in 1854 these irregulars invaded the Turkish territory, commencing by theft, and ending with murder. Brigandage, therefore, until very recently, has been a sort of national pastime. While Grecians were perpetually vaunting their native land as the cradle of literature and art, they were daily neglecting all those virtues of which they so loudly boasted.

The former state of the Grecian army was as follows:—The Frontier Guards, as they are termed, or the gendarmes, were raised by voluntary enlistment, for a service of two years' duration.

This latter force cost the State about 750,000 drachms per annum; the Frontier Guards about 850,000; being a total charge on the exchequer—a somewhat useless one—of 1,600,000 drachms.

The above amount appears to have been sufficient to pay, lodge, and arm 3,500 men and 150 horses, which then was really the efficient military force of the kingdom. After 1838 they were recruited by conscription,—a difficult, nay, dangerous operation in such a country.

The annual contingent was fixed at 12,000 men, the duration of service being limited to four years.

The Government gave notice to each commune that it was required to furnish so many soldiers every year; and the municipal authorities were compelled, or at least charged, to find them. Greece, however, being divided into a multitude of small royalties, every one of which is in a measure dependent on two or three individuals more or less rich and powerful than the others, if justice does not exist in the capital, it certainly will not take refuge in the country.

The consequences were evident: neither the heads of the villages nor their families, neither their friends nor their friends' friends, were ever drawn in the conscription; and the poor fellows who were forced to draw were sure to draw the bad numbers. If chance gave them a good one, they were ordered to draw again. So much for the land of liberty.

Nor was this the sole injustice, for the poor fellows who were thus literally pressed into the service had no chance of becoming officers, for the army list was already overflowing; while the military school at Ereopodes—a sort of compromise between La Flecke and St. Cyr—annually threw on the Government a dozen cadets without hope of advancement. These lads were paid about two pounds ten shillings per month, and often had to wait seven years for a subaltern's commission.

The navy was and is equally encumbered—that is to say, as regards officers. This army and this navy are always looking towards Turkey, as other nations possibly do towards England,—like cats that are tempted to play with hot chestnuts. It is to be hoped King George the First will reform his military and his naval force, causing them to think more of Greece and less of Turkey.

Meanwhile, it is very difficult to ascertain at the moment the precise

force of the so-called army of Greece. It may, however, be estimated at about 8,000 men, a third of whom are officers. A fair estimate may thus be drawn of its utter inefficiency for service under any circumstances.

I heard a little anecdote the other day touching the Great Sultan, the constant bugbear of Greece, which has its point. It is said a pianist, by name Willy, or something like it, played before his Majesty "The Light of the World." This man, a true-born Austrian, wished, and with good taste, that all the world should believe him to be an Englishman; and I, for one, admit his good sense. He played in the presence of the Sultan; so did Litz. On his Majesty being asked which he preferred, he replied, "I am no judge of music; but I fancy Litz, for he perspired the most."

I must now bid adieu to Greece,—

"August Athena! where,

Where are thy men of might!—thy grand in soul!

Gone, glimmering through the dream of things that were.

First in the race that led to glory's goal,

They won and pass'd away. Is this the whole!

A schoolboy's tale, the wonder of an hour,—

The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole

Are sought in vain; and o'er each mouldering tower,

Dim with the mist of years, grey flits the shade of power."

I return to *my* fatherland,—that precious island in which honest men can live in peace and happiness, with less ostentation or outlay than in any other portion of Europe, and with tenfold the convenience and comfort—a word utterly ignored in practice anywhere else on earth.

It is six p.m. of a November evening. Not a cloud lingers in the sky, not a ripple on the water, as I stand on the deck of the small Austrian steamer the *Alexander*, while we steam out of the harbour of the Piræus. A thousand lights already glimmer from the portholes or the mastheads of the noble ships at anchor. On the deck of a French liner the band plays merrily: the admiral and his guests are doubtless enjoying a good French dinner; and, to judge from the illuminated cabins and ward-rooms, my countrymen are passing their time equally pleasantly in gastronomic indulgence. Good-bye, and good wishes to them all! I am off once more—homeward bound.

The *Ægean* Sea is calm and blue for the nonce, November though it be; and the rocky peaks of the islands stand out clearly defined in the bright moonlight. We pass in sight of Colonna's cliffs, which "gleam along the wave," and bear away for Syra, off the town of which, after a few short hours' run, we drop our anchor, and I seek my narrow berth and repose. The night was precisely one which, again and again, has induced poets and travellers to speak in raptures of the calm seas and unrivalled charms of the Archipelago—precisely as a foreigner, who may chance to have been at the last Derby, on his return home shrugs his shoulders, abuses our climate, and declares "*que ces Anglais sont drôle*; they love to revel in mud and mist. It always rains in England."

Syra is simply a human beehive, perched on a treeless and rocky mountain side; it is a cluster of houses, covering the hill-side almost to its very summit. Rain is scarcely known there, and scarcely wanted; for the only vestige of wood seems to be about half a dozen fig trees, and very little vegetation of any kind exists upon the island, which is supplied almost entirely from its neighbours. During the summer the heat is intense; and during the whole year, with the exception of occasional stiff blows, the climate is mild and pleasant, and the skies are clear. Awaiting the larger Austrian Lloyd's steamer, in which I had taken passage to Trieste, I whiled away the long hours of the day by strolling about the streets and visiting our amiable consul. I have nothing to say of the town or its inhabitants, save that the bees are very active in their small commercial pursuits. Their harbour, in which there is much small shipping, is good and safe, and as the whole length of the quay, which forms the base of the town, stinks intolerably of dried fish, oil, and grease, I conceive their commercial pursuits are in those lines. The English consul, good man, was cheerful, hospitable, and happy, in his august position. For my own part, I should prefer tending a flock of sheep on Salisbury Plain. It is well we are not all of the same tastes and opinions; for all I know to the contrary, the emoluments may atone for the banishment. At 5 p.m. I changed my berth in the *Alexander* for one on board the far larger steamer *Pluto*; and at 9 p.m., about three hours after the usual time, we steamed away by Cape Angelo and Cerigo for Corfu. I will not dwell on the details of this short voyage, and will only state that when I arose to breakfast on the following morning we were steaming past Cape Matapan, I believe the most southern point in Europe; and ere we sat down to a very indifferent dinner, we had passed Mondon and Navarino—celebrated for that "untoward event" which, in four hours, crushed the Turkish fleet, and opened a future highway to Grecian prosperity and independence, which the Greeks have never yet trodden.

After passing Navarino, the weather, hitherto clear and pleasant, became windy and wet; and as we approached the island of Zante, and subsequently ran through the Ionian Islands during the night, the canopy of heaven was as black as jet, even when morning dawned. The wind whistled through the island hills, and the rain fell in torrents; so that when we approached the beautiful island of Corfu—which under a clear summer or winter sky is charming—all looked heavy and dull, as if the very islands already mourned the fate which approached them. No sooner had we come to anchor under the citadel—or, I should say, Lord High Commissioner's palace—than I went on board a beautiful English frigate, the *Magicienne*, and had some converse with her gallant captain, who was about to sail for Beyrout. He appeared ill pleased with the weather, and foreboded a stormy night. Happily, the wind he was about to encounter was precisely that which drove us along towards Trieste. Had it been otherwise, I fancy I should never again have been sufficiently

sane even to write these simple lines. I have little to say against the good ship *Pluto*, as a ship. She is a wooden vessel, and was built in old England, "in a hurry." She is an admirable sea-boat—at least, she rolled very smoothly,—and was and is commanded by a cheerful, courteous, and gallant little Austrian captain; but, as I said before, she was built in a hurry, as were many other vessels during the Crimean war, and sold as soon as made, for no end of money, to any one of the numerous companies ready to snap them up. But this hurry, as regards the *Pluto*, means simply that her fittings are built of unseasoned wood, and badly put together. The consequences were maddening. I do not recollect ever having passed two nights on board a ship in a state of such actual extension of nerves. I recently read of a terrible, though true story, of a young French lady who died raving mad. On a *post-mortem* examination, it was discovered that an earwig had actually made its way through her ear into the brain, and in the brain it was found living. God help her! what tortures she must have endured till death relieved her! In proportion were the tortures I endured from the intolerable creaking of the *Pluto's* fixings, as Yankees would call them, throughout the day and night,—such, indeed, as no toothache or earache could surpass.

Having passed an hour on board her Majesty's *Magicienne*, I forthwith paid my respects to the Lord High Commissioner, Sir H. Roche, whom I had known for several years, and who is as amiable as he is admirable in the position he holds,—a position in which, if I am not greatly in error, the Greeks will heartily wish him back ere he has left it for a year. Nothing can be more charming than the site of the Lord High Commissioner's residence, or palace it may be justly called. In every respect it is preferable to that of his Majesty George the First, at Athens. The position on which it stands, guarded or overshadowed by the citadel—the ditch of which reaches to the foot of the garden,—is one of admirable beauty, overlooking the bay and the little island of *Pieto*, and the Albanian mountains beyond. *Corfu*, in fact—the ancient *Coreyra*, the gem of the Ionian Islands, though some give a preference to *Zante*—is in every respect an interesting and beautiful island, as beautiful in its peculiar nature as the Isle of Wight. Since the English occupation or protection, moreover, the islanders have made some rapid strides in order and civilization; consequently, the roads are good, the houses well built and clean, and the resources of the island—as of all the islands under English rule—developed to the fullest degree. The whole appearance of *Corfu* is, in fact, most striking and beautiful; and one can but anticipate with fear that when these noble islands, of which I consider *Corfu* to be the gem, are given over to the Greeks, they will cease to display that remarkable cultivation and order in which we now find them under their present admirable government. How can the island be otherwise than prosperous, with barracks filled with English troops, clean and well kept; an esplanade and public walks like those in most

of the civilized capitals in Europe; money spent among the inhabitants to support these troops, and the small naval force always here, always coming and going; resident officers and their families, and the visitors they bring there; English yachts and sportsmen?—for there is sport on the islands, and first-rate sport on the neighbouring Albanian coast. Indeed, I fancy it is only the absence of good hotels—though the hotels of Corfu, comparatively speaking, are not bad,—and the want of sufficient house accommodation, which prevents hundreds, who pass their winters in Italy and the south of France, from taking up their abode in beautiful Corfu.

But I must return to the creaking *Pluto*, which now glides between Corfu and the rugged, though interesting, shores of Albania, to the open Adriatic. Dark and gloomy was the night, high the wind which drove us onwards to the fair port of Trieste; and all through the next day we were rolling and creaking twelve knots an hour, with a foaming sea around us. The longest and the roughest day has, however, its close; and when another morning broke, in calm water, with pleasant, well-watered scenes on our larboard bow, we were safely entering the land-enchained, pleasant bay of Trieste, when, notwithstanding the miseries of the last two nights—for what is worse than nerves extended and physical nature exhausted?—I was mad enough, all was so calm and pleasant again, to transfer my belongings from the *Pluto* to the little *Venetia*, bound that night for Venice. I think I shall hate Venice henceforward, and I have solemnly declared never to travel a league by sea, if I can gain the same point by land, on a railway; but the day was so fair, the sea so calm, that I little thought we should pass the night with a hurricane around us and a water-spout above; yet such was our fate. At midnight, with many others, we went on board the pleasant little steamer—"confound her!" As we left the port all was fair and smooth. Scarce an hour elapsed, however, ere the dark clouds spread themselves over the heavens like a pall, and the rain came down in torrents—a very sea above as below,—and the wind roared as the wind can roar in the Adriatic, accompanied with such rolling and creaking as made me regret even the nights on board the *Pluto*. We did, however, arrive at Venice at last—thanks be to Providence!—some hours later than we ought to have arrived; and I entered the so-called beautiful Venice, which on this occasion looked as wretched as a hen exposed to a thunderstorm;—with a damp, moist body, a drenched portmanteau, and overwrought feelings, to be hampered into a black coffin of a gondola, and sent on to the railway; after which I had foul weather all the way to Milan and Turin; over the Mount Cenis, two feet deep in snow, to Paris; and thence a wild crossing of the Channel to old England, and temporary rest.

THE REVERSE OF THE SHIELD.

THE one saw it silver and the other gold, and they defied each other to mortal combat, to prove the respective truth of their contrary statements; and both were right, for each looked but at *one* side of the shield.

The story is as old and as true—this story of the two knights—as the other “old, old story.” We are all so prone to fight for the side of the shield that we see, and to utterly ignore the reverse; to hold to our point of view through thick and thin, and to doubt the visual accuracy of the knight who happens to come up from the opposite direction. With asinine tenacity we adhere to the delusion that we alone see things as they are, and that our opponent is either foolish or false. The reverse of the shield in everything is a long time in being made apparent to us; we continually forget that it is there; and so through life we do battle for an idea that we would sometimes willingly relinquish if we could only see round a corner.

There is cark and corroding care very often on the back of the golden surface that offers so fair a front to the world. The successful man is voted arrogant, on the pre-supposition that he is inflated with success, when truly he is only absent through scheming earnestly how to carry it on triumphantly to the end. He has made a *coup* on the Stock Exchange, or with a book or picture; he has married an heiress, or followed his wealthy sire, of whom he is the only son, to the grave; he has distinguished himself in his profession, and gained *kudos* from the press, and his portrait has been published in the *Illustrated London News*. Bah! as a matchless metropolitan Jehu once observed to a friend of mine, “’Bus driving ain’t all sweets.” Look for a moment at the reverse of the shield; open his closet, and you will find a bony skeleton that rattles in his ear, perhaps when the goblet of life is outwardly brimming over with the wine of joy and love and fame.

He is successful! His Stock Exchange exploits have made him a noble in the Court of Mammon. Perchance the patent of his nobility has been paid for at a price that makes his soul tingle with sad remembrance. To gain much he must have risked much; the event of a day may bring the howls of the orphan about his ears, and saturate his path with the tears of the widow. Fauntleroy—to whom Wilkie Collins has done such fair and ample justice, with that kindly penetrating instinct of his—must have felt the links of the chain of gold he wound around himself in his soul often and often. Of course he was not always miserable though, as it is too much the fashion to fancy a criminal must be of necessity. He erred and suffered, he did kindly deeds and rejoiced, as do the best of mankind,—for who is wholly bad or good? While vice is reigning and triumphant—while it lasts in clover, in fact—it is apt to be misrepresented as turning its nose up at poverty-stricken virtue, and being generally haughty and

stuck up. Do not believe it! Perdita drives her ponies through the Park before the eyes of scandalized humanity, to the admiration of men, and the profound, envious, contemptuous dissatisfaction of women. She smiles, and looks saucy and gay. Heaven help her! Never gnash the teeth of rage against her for *that*; the smiles and saucy gaiety may be genuine enough at the time, but there is a reverse to the shield: Perdita has her hours of bitter retrospection—of memories of a better past, and doubts of a prosperous future. Accord her this meed of toleration, and do not deny her in your faultless hearts the feelings of occasional remorse and sorrow and shame, to which here, in the garish light of day, she seems lost and dead. Women find it very hard to look at the reverse of the shield when they are gently scanning the faults of their sister women.

“A few seem favourites of fate,
In pleasure's lap caress'd,
Yet think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly bless'd.”

The popular author, in whose path the roses of criticism, with their thorns well kept under, are strewn, who sees his book rapidly running through many editions, and hears his name on the lips of the majority of the literary mob, is not perhaps the enviable creature tyros in his art and eager aspirants for a similar fame may deem him. His publishers may benefit by the many editions more than he does (and this alone would take the edge off delight); the critics may have avoided all mention of those pet portions of his work to which he gave his best efforts,—or if they have been mentioned, it has been with that faint praise which destroys. His work may have been intended as a *bombon* for the select few, and his fastidious soul may shrink from the meritorious mention made of it by the many-headed mob. He may have a dread that he has done his best; and that all his future efforts, however well considered and earnest they may be, will fall short of what he has done already, and tarnish the fame he has achieved; or, knowing how fickle the public taste is, he may, reasonably enough, remember with a pang in his hour of triumph even that too much of the same sort of thing—and he does not feel competent to produce anything markedly different—will surely pall upon the public, and cease to sell, and bring him nought but derision, long bills for pens and paper, and soul-wearying sympathy and pity from his friends. Now every one who *has* been a success, or who hopes to be a success, will understand the full bitterness of this reflection,—to gain pity where you once won praise; to come down to being tolerated, after being “very much applauded for that you have done,” like the young lady who followed—in the nautical ballad—the fortunes of Mr. William Taylor. All this is a reverse to the shield that we do not even dream of when we read in the advertising columns, “Ready this day at all the libraries, the eighth edition of ‘Malvina the Murderess.’”

The wedder of the heiress! is his lot all bliss when he has made the grand *coup*, and married for money after a long career of debts, difficulties, and dishonoured bills? I think not; better even these latter things than serfdom to an old woman, and secession from all claim to the unsullied name of gentleman. When youth, and beauty, and wealth go together, then, the combination is well worth the seeker's pains. But when an elderly and ugly Miss Rilmansegg buys the hand of a dun-hunted one, and gilds his career, and hoists him up in the world on the seat of a marvellously well-horsed mail phaeton, the reverse of the shield he shows to society is apt to be a hideous one.

If you have done a remarkably gallant or clever thing, do you like to see it set forth to the world in the stereotyped phraseology of a penny-a-liner? Would you not ten times rather they had not maltreated your deeds in the daily papers, and your features in the illustrated ones? You are the hero of the day, may be, but you *do* wish that ungrammatical sentence had not been put into your mouth, and that vacuous expression into your face. You feel that neither mentally nor bodily are you rendered as you would desire to be, and you writhe under the false impression that will get abroad respecting you, and loathe the popularity upon whose accession every one is congratulating you. This may not be a very bad reverse to the shield; but for all that, it is a side that is not seen, and therefore not suspected by the many.

If a man conducts himself in some rapidly approaching crisis of his fate with coolness, fortitude, and proud reserve, how surely some will be found to rail against him for his non-emotional demeanour and general unworthiness! One whom the event of an hour, the merest chance, the lightest accident, may send to the dogs, should—according to the dicta of some—make preparations beforehand for the journey, in the shape of abject humility and profound kowtowings to all his sententious and superior surroundings. If he does not howl over the possible failure of a plan on which his all depends, he is forthwith deemed lost to all sense of moral obligation. His enemies shake their heads, and his friends prognosticate that such callous indifference must terminate badly. He may feel ten thousand times more anxiety about the result than does the boiled lobster, who pants eagerly towards everybody, crying aloud for sympathy, and requesting an audience to which to detail what he dreads, and hopes, and fears, and thinks. The reverse of his shield may be dull and leaden-hued indeed, *but nobody sees it*.

Who knows what another suffers? and how is it that we all so audaciously go about judging one another, and looking at things so critically from our own point of view, and resolutely deeming every other one wrong? What is venial enough in the east is a vice and a crime in the west; and why should wisdom and right be more unfailing where the sun sets than where it first rises, fresh and fair? Rampant prejudice and narrow-mindedness, these are the stumblingblocks over which we are per-

petually tumbling ; and till we are totally freed from the one, and have burst the bonds of the other, we shall always be disputing with the man who knows the shield is silver because he has looked, and declaring that it is gold, and that we will die rather than surrender our opinion.

I would preach a nobler faith and a wider toleration than any Jew or Gentile, pagan, or papist, or Protestant has yet set forth. If we *only* believed in the good that is in all men,—if we only looked to our own evil deeds a little more, and let those of our neighbour utterly alone, neither seeking to guide, direct, or govern,—how the mountainous obstructions to our pleasant progress through life would be levelled, and how much more comfortable we should all be !

Believe in the good that is in all men ; and when all we see is frailty, and folly, and falsity, remember that there is a reverse to the shield, and chide not the sinner for the side that is shown. We are not called upon to judge one another ; our doing so is wholly a human institution, and lacking all of divine element in its organization ;—the sooner we abolish it the better.

A. H. T.

OUR TOUR ROUND THE SUN IN 1864.

BY CAPTAIN A. W. DRAYSON, R.A.

We are really very great travellers, let us be where we may upon this little globe; if we scarcely wander more than a mile from our homes, yet we are carried around a vast circle, and over a distance of nearly six hundred million miles, during each year of our lives. This is travelling in earnest, and the vehicle that conveys us is one well suited for its office. Would that we knew the details by which this world was thus regularly driven round its course, and first started on its mysterious journey! But we are yet infants in knowledge, and babies in wisdom; for although we know a few facts connected with this and other worlds belonging to the solar family, yet when we inquire beyond these mere evident matters, we are immediately encompassed by difficulties and uncertainties that render our further progress almost impossible. Seeing, then, how much there is yet for us to learn, and how weak is our present mode of gaining knowledge and arriving at truth, we naturally inquire whether we shall ever gain wisdom by other modes than those already known, and be able to approach the truth by the aid of paths of which we are at present ignorant? The wish, or desire, however, must always precede the labour and means. As long as men are contented with that which they at present possess, they will not seek for anything more: thus, to a certain extent, progress is the result of discontent.

There are few things more lamentable, and which indicate a contracted mind, than to hear individuals exclaiming against the present time as being so devoid of interest, in consequence of everything having been discovered. Such is by no means an uncommon complaint; whereas the real facts are, that only within a comparatively few years the most candid and far-seeing persons have become aware that we are ignorant of the *causes* of almost everything that we see; and hence we are merely on the surface of truth, and have not yet penetrated into its inner depths.

Until we obtain the key to unlock more of the treasures in nature's laboratory, we must content ourselves with noticing facts; and amongst these, not the least interesting are those which we observe during our annual voyage round the sun. Just as in a railway journey we come near to various attractive portions of country, and then leave them far behind, so do we on the earth, at certain seasons of the year, come close to various planets, and then pass away from them. Groups of stars and brilliant members of the stellar universe are approached and then left behind, whilst others again become for a period invisible to us, because the sun is between these and our earth; and when the brilliant orb of day thus intervenes, the more distant suns become invisible.

In the present paper it will be our object to call attention to the

interesting or remarkable facts which occur at various periods during our tour round the sun in the year 1864.

At about half-past ten a.m. on the morning of the 31st December, 1863, the earth was at its shortest distance from the sun, and therefore, when measured with instruments, the sun would appear larger at this time than at any other. Six months after this date, the earth is farthest from the sun, which therefore then appears smaller than at any other period, the actual difference in the angular diameter being thirty-three seconds,—a very small angle, but one easily measured by various instruments.

Upon verbally stating the fact that we are about three million miles nearer the sun in December than in June, we have so often been met with one remark, that we feel bound to anticipate the question here, and to give an answer to it.

The usual inquiry is, "If we are so much nearer the sun in December than in June or July, how is it that we are so much colder?"

This inquiry indicates at once that the individual who makes it supposes that the sun is like a fire, which warms us most the nearer we are to it. It is true that some years back, when many more errors were prevalent on scientific subjects, such a belief was encouraged, in spite of facts which indicated that other conditions besides distance from the sun caused a vast change in the relative heat of localities. Thus the summits of mountains, when the sun was overhead, were nearer to it than the valleys at their feet, and yet the former were snow-covered, whilst the latter were glowing with warmth.

The great law with regard to the sun's heat on earth is, that this varies as does the sun's altitude above the horizon. If, then, the sun at mid-day is overhead, the heat will be greater than when it is low down near the horizon; but in December the sun at mid-day reaches only about fifteen degrees above the horizon of London, whilst in June it is sixty-two degrees above it at mid-day; and this great difference in altitude is far more than sufficient to overcome any real or supposed difference produced by our being three million miles nearer the sun at the one period than at the other.

During the whole month of January the sun is rising higher at mid-day, and remains a longer time above the horizon. So great is this increase during the month, that if, on the first of January, we made a mark in the sky to indicate the position of the sun at twelve o'clock (noon), we should, on the thirty-first of the same month, find the sun ten times its own diameter above the mark.

In January the earth is well situated to enable us to view the glorious constellation of Orion, for our planet is then between the sun and this constellation. The three stars in line, like the stumps at cricket, are easily recognized, and these form the belt of Orion, which will be found south of us about eleven o'clock p.m. during the month.

We may here mention that if any star happens to be exactly south of

us at any time,—say ten o'clock at night, on the first of the month,—then it will occupy the same position at four minutes to ten on the following night; at eight minutes to ten on the next succeeding, and so on. Thus, during a month, a star will alter its time of passing to the south of us as much as two hours. This change is due to the earth's movement in space; because, as the earth moves on, so it brings the star each night earlier to the south than on that preceding.

The three stars of Orion's belt point nearly to Sirius, the brilliant dog-star. The whole of this portion of the heavens is particularly brilliant. There is Orion's belt, unique in its configuration; directly above it are the two bright stars Betelgeux and Bellatrix, the former being just above the belt; at an almost equal distance below the belt is Rigel, a star as bright as either of the preceding; on the left of the belt, and nearly in the same straight line, is the most dazzlingly brilliant star in the heavens,—this is Sirius; at an almost equal distance on the opposite side of the belt, and very nearly in a straight line with Sirius, we find the red star Aldebaran, which is but little inferior in magnitude to any star, except the unrivalled Sirius. From Aldebaran we trace on a line to the right, and we come to the small cluster of stars known as the Pleiades, "Seven sisters," or "Jack and his waggon," names which have been given to this group of stars.

Most of the stars which we have here mentioned were much noticed by those ancient students of the heavens whose works have been handed down to us. Hesiod, who is supposed to have lived some 900 years B.C., promulgated some precepts concerning agricultural proceedings, and he said that when the Pleiades rose at the same time that the sun set, the corn ought to be reaped; but that when they set at the same time as the sun, the ground should be ploughed. The same writer also tells us that, in his day, the season for the vintage was when Orion and Sirius were in the mid-heaven, and that when the Pleiades rose, at the time of sunsetting, from the dark sea, it was necessary to sail in large vessels, with plenty of ballast, as storms of wind might then be expected.

Virgil also tells us many similar things connected with these stars; amongst others, he says that when Sirius sets with the sun, tares and pulse should be sown.

These agricultural cautions, as we may term them, serve to indicate roughly the change that has taken place in the position of the seasons as regards portions of the earth's orbit, a result due to the precession of the equinox; for no farmer in the present day would follow the advice above given as regards the time for sowing, reaping, or ploughing, although, in the times of these writers, their statements were quite correct.

If the relative position of the stars of Orion be carefully noticed soon after dark, and again shortly before midnight, their change will be found very great, for early in the evening the "belt" will be on its side, the stars Betelgeux and Rigel being also partially horizontal; towards

midnight, however, the belt will be nearly horizontal, whilst Betelgeux will be above Rigel, the two being almost vertical. By these changes of position, the general style of movements of the celestial bodies may be comprehended, for they all partake of the same kind of motion as those immediately about the belt of Orion.

Our satellite, the moon, will, on the 9th of January, be in the same part of the heavens as the sun, and about eight times the sun's diameter higher above the horizon.

The new moon occurs in this month at fourteen minutes to eight on the morning of the 9th, whilst the full moon occurs at three minutes to ten on the evening of the 23rd. The orbit of the moon is so arranged, that, during the winter season in each hemisphere, she remains a much longer time above the horizon than during summer; thus, when she is full, she is at a greater height in winter than in summer, but owing to a regular change which takes place in her orbit, the greatest possible altitude only occurs once in about eighteen years. The greatest altitude of the moon during the month of January occurs on Wednesday the 20th, but this is not so great by nearly eight degrees as it was some years previously, and as it will again be in some years to come. The best time for examining the moon with a telescope will be between the 11th and 15th of the month, for then every mountain peak and crater side will cast long shadows over the adjoining surface, and thus make the jagged edge of the moon a most interesting object for examination.

About the middle of January, the early riser may perceive a brilliant-looking star rising in the east, and preceding the sun by nearly three hours; this will be the planet Venus, which will then be well situated for examination with a telescope; she will appear rather more than half illuminated, and, therefore, in form similar to the moon about two days after the first quarter.

Any persons who may be desirous of setting their watches or clocks, may do so within, at least, a minute, by directing a telescope towards the moon, and observing the instant of time at which a star disappears, and again when it reappears. During January several opportunities occur, but we will select only those which will not oblige a person to sit up very late, for we fear that amateur astronomers cannot often be persuaded to resign their bed in favour of a telescope.

At 8 min. past 12 on the night of the 15th, a star called π Piscium disappears behind the moon; it reappears at 44 min. past 12.

On the 18th, a star, ω' Tauri, disappears at 54 min. past 8.

On the 19th, ι Tauri disappears at 2 min. past 12, and reappears at 38 min. past 12.

On the 20th, χ' Orionis disappears behind the moon at 57 min. past 7, and reappears at 13 min. past 9.

On the 24th, κ Cancrī disappears at 30 min. past 6, and reappears at 15 min. past 7.

We have here a very extensive choice from which to select, and it merely requires some few hints with regard to details, to enable the least skilful person to practically make use of the information which we have given.

In order to observe any object distinctly with a telescope we ought to possess also some sort of rest, upon which the instrument will remain perfectly steady. Any person who possesses a moderate "family telescope" is usually provided also with a stand for it. If otherwise, a rough rest may easily be made by the aid of half a dozen books arranged on a small table or chair near a window.

In all cases where a star is hidden by the moon, the star will disappear on the left side of the moon, and will reappear on the right side. So that when only a small portion of the illuminated surface of our satellite is visible from the earth, there will be a considerable part of the moon invisible. In some instances we can trace out the circular form of the moon by the aid of our telescope, although it is invisible to the naked eye; and thus we can from time to time see how near the star is to this circle, and then keep our eyes fixed on the two, so as to note the instant of disappearance. If we cannot see the non-illuminated portion of the disc, we can in imagination trace out the moon's circular form, and then estimate the distance of the star from it.

When the moon is full it is very difficult to distinguish a small star near it; but we can overcome the dazzling effects of the moon to a certain extent, by allowing only a small portion of it to be visible in our telescope, and thus keeping it on the right hand side of the opening, we can from time to time move the instrument slightly, so as to retain it in the same position.

The times which we have given as those of the disappearance of the various stars will differ slightly for various portions of Great Britain, but not more than some seconds, so that a very close approximation may be obtained to the time by this observation.

Another and a very important problem may be decided by the observation of stars at the instant that the moon causes them to disappear. If the moon possess an independent atmosphere of her own—that is, if around her there is a mass of gases similar to our own air—then, when a star is passed by the moon, a peculiar effect would be noticed. The star, instead of at once disappearing, would for an instant appear dim, then it would rest, as it were, on the moon's side, and then disappear. Now every person who possesses eyes and a telescope will be able to investigate this matter, and form from his own observations an opinion upon the subject, or, in other words, instead of receiving on faith statements connected with an astronomical subject, he will be able to prove the truth or error of the assertion by means of his own eyes. With even a good pair of opera glasses we may observe this phenomenon, and by the aid of average telescopes, such as those usually seen in the hands of

amateur sailors at the seaside, we can distinguish clearly much that is of interest on the moon, whilst we are waiting for the disappearance of the star in order to set our watch or clocks.

As our present paper is intended as a guide for the whole year, and to enable those who may be interested in the subject to observe all that is to be seen during our "tour" of nearly six hundred million miles, we will give a list of the time and date of those "occultations"—as the eclipse of stars by the moon is termed—which are best suited to the observation of amateurs. It will then be highly improbable that out of this list there are not found some that will suit the reader, and upon which he may try his skill.

During February there are not many opportunities for observing occultations, and only one which we shall here record. This will occur on the 20th of the month, at 32 min. after 6; the star's name being 60 Cancri. It will reappear at 34 min. past 7, and as the moon at the time will be two days from the full, she will not be too brilliant to enable an observer to see the star.

During March there will be several opportunities, but we will select those most likely to be convenient as regards time. On the 15th, at 36 min. past 7, the star called 71 Orionis disappears. On the 18th, two stars; one disappearing at 58 min. past 6, and reappearing at 57 min. past 7; the other disappears at 44 min. past 9, and reappears at 4 min. past 11. Again, on the 19th, at 11 min. past 6, one of the stars of Leo will disappear, and will be again visible on the right of the moon at 28 min. past 7.

As the full moon does not occur in March until the morning of the 23rd, all the preceding occultations may be readily and easily observed.

In April, our first opportunity is on the 11th, when two observations may be taken on the stars in the constellation of Orion,—not the stars of the belt, but smaller stars belonging to the same group. The first of these disappears at 28 min. past 6, and reappears at 38 min. past 7; the other disappears at 13 min. past 11. On the 20th, two days before the full moon, one of the stars of Virgo is occulted at 40 min. past 8, and reappears at 48 min. past 9.

During May there is but one suitable in all respects for the amateur's observation. This is 21 Sagittarii, which disappears on the 23rd, at 9 h. 46 m. and reappears at 10 h. 45 m.

In June there are many stars suitable. The full moon occurs on the afternoon of the 19th, and the first quarter on the 13th. On the 8th, at 29 min. past 10, a star disappears behind the moon. On the 11th, one of the stars of Leo at 38 min. past 10. On the 18th, at 27 min. past 12 in the morning, another star disappears, and after this date several stars are occulted at later hours, such as two and three o'clock a.m.

During July we select the 14th of the month, on which day 41 Libræ is occulted at 43 min. past 10, and another star of the same constellation

at 49 min. past 11. In August the full moon occurs on the 17th, and on the night of the 13th we may make ready for observing two occultations after midnight; one occurring at 20 min., and the other 44 min. after 12. The stars that are then eclipsed are 16 and 15 Sagittarii.

With the exception of one of the stars of Capricornus, eclipsed on the 13th September, at 32 min. past 10, we must leave this month blank.

During October we may observe on the 8th, the 9th, and the 14th. On the 8th, at 7 h. 17 m., the disappearance occurs, and at 7 h. 48 m. the reappearance. Again, at 7 h. 21 m. another star's occultation may be observed; the reappearance occurring at 8 min. past 8. On the 9th, the star β Capricorni disappears at 8 h. 35 m., and reappears at 9 h. 28 m. On the 14th, one of the stars of Pisces is occulted at 6 h. 59 m., and reappears at 7 h. 48 m.

During November there is only one suitable opportunity before twelve o'clock at night: this occurs at 11 h. 52 m. on the 10th.

On the 4th and 5th of December we select two stars, one of which disappears on the 4th at 4 min. past 9, and reappears at 34 min. past; the other disappears on the 5th, at 8 h. 35 m., and reappears at 9 h. 29 m.

Here we have a tolerably extensive list, from which any amateur may select those stars whose times of disappearance suit him best; and he may, as before mentioned, take notice of many interesting facts connected with the occultation besides the mere event of a star's disappearance.

During the months of January, February, and March, the face of the heavens gradually changes; those brilliant groups of stars which, during the earlier period, might be found south of us at midnight, will at the same hour be seen in the west and south-west during March.

There will always be certain groups of stars which are visible above the horizon during the whole year. One of these constellations is so generally known that we will make use of it as a guide by which to find other stars. We here refer to the seven stars of the Great Bear, the two pointers of which, called Dubhe and Merak, point nearly to the pole-star. There are several *groups* of stars which we will find by reference to these seven stars of the Great Bear. First there is Cassiopea, which is always on the opposite side of the pole-star to that on which is the Great Bear; so that if the latter is below the pole-star, the former is above it; and if the latter is on the right, the former will be on the left of the pole. The constellation Cassiopea is in the shape of the letter W, five stars forming the figure.

During April we shall find nearly overhead, at about ten o'clock, a semicircular group, one star of which is much larger than the others. This group is called the Northern Crown, and is nearly midway between two very bright stars, one of which is called Vega, the other Arcturus: both these stars may be readily found as follows:—

Draw an imaginary line from the pole-star through the last star of the seven forming the Great Bear. Trace this line on, and the first large

star is Arcturus; or continue the curve formed by the three tail stars of the Great Bear, and we again come to the same object.

Vega is found by tracing from the pole-star a line which shall be at right angles to a line joining the pole-star and the pointers, and it is on the same side of the pole as the Great Bear.

There are several stars visible at this period (April), which cannot be seen at any other time of year. Thus, low down in the south we find a very bright star, near which are two others less brilliant. These belong to the constellation Scorpio, the brightest being Antares. More to the eastward we find another visitor, still very bright; this is Spica Virginis. We have not space sufficient to refer to the many interesting stars, several of which are double, and which occupy prominent positions in the heavens during April, especially as there are other objects which begin to assume a leading position in the sky.

During April the planet Jupiter will be visible; he rises about half-past ten on the night of the 1st, and about half-past eight on the 30th. Saturn also is now very brilliant, and situated to the west of Jupiter. Both these beautiful celestial bodies are well worthy of telescopic investigation, and from an examination of Jupiter we may be able to find Greenwich time to within a very few seconds, by means of the eclipses of his satellites. During the months of April, May, and June, several opportunities occur, of which we will give a list. First, however, we will refer to some of the most interesting groupings of these moons around Jupiter, and which may be seen by a common telescope.

On the night of the 2nd of April, three of the satellites will be found close to Jupiter, and on his left; whilst the fourth is at a considerable distance, and on the right. On the 9th of April all four satellites will be seen on the left of the planet, whilst on the 15th they will be all on the right, and grouped together in a very pretty cluster. On the 23rd, two will be on the right, and close together, and two on the left, rather more distant from each other.

On the 1st of May, three will be visible on the left, and one on the right; whilst on the 18th, all four will be found close together, on the left; but on the following night, the 19th, they will be all four on the opposite side of the planet.

These four satellites are at different distances from Jupiter, and it is only when they are passing each other that they appear close together. An idea may be formed of the relative distances of these satellites, if we look at them when they are spread out on each side of Jupiter. A very excellent opportunity occurs on the 6th of May, at midnight: the first satellite of Jupiter is then on the left, and nearest to him; the second is on the right, and occupies the second place; then comes the third; and lastly, the fourth, each being in order as regards distance from Jupiter, and each almost at its greatest distance from him. Nearly a similar arrangement occurs on the 18th April.

If we look with our telescopes at these satellites on the 6th, 14th, 22nd, or 31st of May, we shall find one of them—the fourth, as it is termed—at a very great distance from Jupiter. It will on those occasions be almost at its greatest distance, although it appears in our glass even then tolerably close.

During every night there are several eclipses or other phenomena occurring in connection with Jupiter's satellites. His is a very busy astronomical world, and his computers must have plenty to do in order to keep his eclipses worked up. He gives our astronomers no small amount of labour, but as he is a very useful member of the planetary world, we have no cause to complain. In order to observe the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites, we should proceed much in the same manner that we did when we arranged our telescope to examine the occultation of stars by the moon, our telescope being fixed in some position from which we can move it slightly, but in which it will remain quite steady.

There are very many more phenomena occurring in connection with Jupiter's moons than when stars are passed by our moon. In the latter instance, the star disappears in consequence of the moon being between us and the star; but in the former, the small satellite may be lost sight of from other causes. These moons are comparatively close to Jupiter, one being about as far off from him as our moon is from us; and as the diameter of Jupiter is nearly eleven times that of the earth, these moons are more frequently eclipsed than is our moon, simply because the shadow of Jupiter is so much bigger. Besides this reason, there is another why these eclipses should occur very frequently; this is, because the path which the satellites trace in the heavens, when seen from Jupiter, is very nearly the same as that of the sun during the Jovian year. With the aid of a moderately good telescope we may, then, observe four different kinds of phenomena. First, we may find one of the satellites close in towards Jupiter, and then suddenly disappear. This may be because the satellite has gone behind Jupiter. Again, we may observe the same effect, which may be due to the satellite having come in front of Jupiter. We may also find that one of these moons suddenly disappears when at a distance from the planet. This result will be due to its having entered the shadow cast by Jupiter, and as it cannot then be illuminated by the sun, it is invisible to us: we may possibly find that this same satellite again reappears as it comes nearer to Jupiter, an effect due to its having passed through the shadow cast by the planet. Again, we may be able to perceive the shadow of a satellite on the surface of Jupiter, and note the time of appearance and disappearance thereof.

To see distinctly *all* these interesting facts we require a good telescope, but we may examine three of them by the aid of a moderate one, if we take the precaution of keeping it perfectly steady by a rest of some kind. We are in possession of a telescope for which we paid the small sum of

thirty shillings, and by the aid of which we can distinguish the satellites of Jupiter, and hence their eclipses.

The disappearance of a satellite is the event most easily noted by an amateur, and thus best suited for observing in order to find the Greenwich time; for the reappearance may not be observed for some seconds, and perhaps not for a longer period, and thus the instant of time at which it occurred may not have been discovered. We will now refer to some of the best evenings for observations upon Jupiter and his moons; but he is not so well situated for observation now as he will be some years hence, for now he will never be very high above the horizon, and will each year become worse and worse, until about the year 1870, when those amongst us who still remain in our material garb will have several seasons suitable for delicate observations. Whilst, however, we do not find Jupiter high enough in the heavens to enable us to observe him well, our friends in the southern hemisphere are gratified with a view of him nearly in their zenith. At the Cape of Good Hope, for instance, Jupiter, on the 1st of May, will attain an altitude of nearly seventy-four degrees, or almost five-sixths of the distance between the horizon and zenith; and thus astronomers in each hemisphere have their best seasons for observation. We will give a few of the opportunities during May when observations may be made; but we may also note during April and June similar events, our want of space being our only reason for treating of this interesting planet somewhat briefly.

On the 1st of May, Jupiter will be south of us in England at about forty-five minutes past twelve at night; consequently, at about ten or half-past ten o'clock he will be found in the south-east, and rather near the horizon. On the 4th of the same month he will be found in nearly the same relative positions at the same hours, and we will suppose that on the evening of the 4th we commence our observations.

Upon directing a common telescope towards Jupiter, at about ten o'clock on the 4th, we shall find two of his moons on the left and close to him, and one at some distance on the right. This will probably be the first view which we shall obtain; but a closer examination will show us another satellite very near to Jupiter, and scarcely distinguishable from him. This will be seen on the left of the planet. At thirty-two minutes past ten this same satellite will be lost sight of, and we shall not see it again until fifteen minutes past twelve, when it becomes visible on the opposite side of Jupiter.

On the 8th of May we shall find two of the satellites close together on the left of the planet, and one at some distance on the right. Close to Jupiter, on the right, we shall at ten o'clock see one of his moons, which will be lost sight of at fifty-seven minutes after ten.

[On the night of the 12th, two satellites will be at unequal distances on the right, and another far off on the left. Close to him, on the left, we shall find his second satellite, which disappears at fifty-three minutes past ten at night.

On the 17th a very pretty grouping will be visible at about half-past twelve. The four satellites will be assembled in two groups, one on each side of the planet. At ten o'clock on the same night, the first satellite will disappear at exactly ten o'clock, and will reappear at fourteen minutes and fifteen seconds past twelve.

On the 22nd of May one of the satellites reappears on the left-hand side of Jupiter, at thirty-six minutes forty-eight seconds past nine p.m.—a very exact time, and one well suited for observing conveniently.

From even these few occurrences we may be able to select some one which will enable us to prove how accurate are many of the calculations connected with practical astronomy in the present day; for, from repeated observations, we have become convinced that if any apparent error occurs, it is most probably due to our eyes or watch, and not to the satellites that we are observing.

On the night of the 12th of May, Jupiter is nearer to us than during any other period of the year; he is in consequence more distinct and brilliant, and appears larger than at any other time. Saturn, about the same date, is becoming gradually more dim; for our annual tour has carried us away from him since the 5th of April, when we were nearest to him.

During the year 1864 there are only two eclipses,—the smallest number that can occur, and which, as is always the case under such conditions, will be of the sun. Neither of these will be visible in England, so that to the multitude it will be a blank year as far as these astronomical phenomena are concerned; but those who look beyond the most palpable facts will find, in Jupiter's eclipses and the occultations of stars by the moon, anything but a barren year, or one devoid of interest.

On May the 5th, the first eclipse occurs; it will be an annular eclipse—a very rare event. This only happens when the moon is farthest from our earth, for then she appears so small that the sun's edge is seen round or outside of the moon, and thus looks like a ring. When the moon is nearest to us she is so large as totally to hide the sun under similar conditions, and thus the eclipse is total. The North Pacific Ocean will be the portion of the world most suitable for observing this eclipse; but it will be visible in a portion of the United States at sunset, and in portions of North Australia at sunrise.

On October the 30th another annular eclipse occurs. This will be visible in the whole of South America, in a portion of the United States for a short period, and at the Cape of Good Hope, at which last station it will be visible at sunset. The line of central eclipse passes between the Cape and the island of St. Helena, and the inhabitants of this island will just be able to see the middle of the eclipse as the sun sets in the ocean around them.

We must now pass on to the month of September, and examine those objects which we have brought into view by this change in our position.

We have now approached again to those stars around the pole of the heavens, and from which we were more distant in June by upwards of seventy million miles than we were in December; and having placed the sun between ourselves and Jupiter, we are unable to see clearly that planet, or any of the stars which we observed during May to be close to him in the heavens. He may, however, be distinguished near the sun; but his glory has passed away, and he looks dim and indistinct.

Another planet—Mars—is now brought into view, and each night approaches nearer to us, and becomes, therefore, a more remarkable object. He is the nearest neighbour to us outside our orbit, and is a very interesting planet for telescopic observation. We can see him best about the end of November, for he is then nearest to us, and as he is at a considerable height above the horizon, he is well suited for examination.

It is a rule that may be remembered, that when a planet passes exactly south of us at midnight, it is nearer to us than at any other time of the year. When the planet passes the south before midnight, then each day we come nearer to it. When the planet passes the south after midnight, then we are moving away from it.

Now Mars passes the south at midnight on the 28th November, 1864, and at that time will appear larger than he did some weeks previously, or than he will some weeks after. It requires a powerful telescope to distinguish the snow around the poles of Mars, but it can be very easily seen; and also this snow will be seen to vary in quantity, according as the two poles are in winter or summer.

When Mars passes the south at midnight, he is only about fifty million miles from the earth—a comparatively short distance, speaking astronomically; for Jupiter, under similar conditions, would be four hundred million miles from us. If Jupiter were as near to us at any time as is Mars, he would appear with a diameter equal to one-fifth of that of our full moon.

It is not until December, 1864, that we obtain a good evening view of Venus. During this month, however, she becomes very conspicuous in the west shortly after sunset; and by the aid of a telescope we can discover her crescent-like form. As she is illuminated by the sun, we shall at this period find her right side brilliant whilst the left side is invisible. She thus looks like the moon when eight or nine days old. In consequence of the great brilliancy of Venus, she is rather a disappointing object to look at with a telescope, because her form is not clearly distinguishable. The best time to observe her is very shortly after the sun has set, and whilst the twilight prevails; then her shape can be well distinguished, as she appears sharp and clearly defined.

The little planet Mercury is rarely seen: first, because he is so near the sun as to set soon after dusk; and secondly, because it is only at certain periods that he can be seen, as he is only at intervals at a sufficient distance from the sun. During the month of September, Mercury will be

visible in the evenings for a short time, especially at the earlier period of the month; but in October he has slipped round the sun, and appears as a morning star. At the end of December, Mercury is again visible as an evening star, and will be found near the moon on the 30th, at five o'clock, when the moon will be a short distance above Mercury.

Neither Uranus nor Neptune presents sufficient attractions to make them interesting to amateurs, if viewed with only ordinary telescopes; but during November and December the former will be visible each night. This planet is best seen when no moon is visible; for the light given by the moon causes all other objects to look dim. Thus, either before the 6th, or after the 16th of the month, we may look out for Uranus. On the 18th of the month Uranus passes exactly south of us at a few minutes before midnight. It is tolerably high above the horizon, being at an elevation of sixty-two degrees and a few minutes. Uranus may be seen at this time about midway between Bellatrix and a very bright star called Capella, which will then be nearly overhead.

During September, October, and November, Orion, Sirius, and the stars near them are invisible during the evening. We find the Great Bear beneath the pole-star at the first-named period, and on the east of it during October,—that is, during the earlier part of the night. Nearly overhead is Alpha Cygni, a very bright star; whilst Vega is to the eastward of it. In the north-west we find Capella, a very bright star, which can readily be found by drawing a line from Vega through the pole-star, and carrying this line on until it meets the first large star, which will be Capella. We now also take a peep at Fomalhaut, a large star belonging to the southern hemisphere, and which can be seen at a short distance above the southern horizon.

Whether, during the year 1864, any remarkable comets will be visible, it is impossible to say, but it is not unlikely that one may come near enough to us to call attention to itself; otherwise the stars, planets, and moon will occupy our entire attention.

Those who are provided with really good telescopes will be able to distinguish many more astronomical wonders than those which we have here briefly dwelt upon; but it is impossible, in so small a space as the pages of a magazine, to do more than refer to a portion of so vast a subject as that resulting from our tour round the sun.

It is not an uncommon thing to hear of comparisons between the southern and northern hemispheres, as regards their stellar beauties, and the palm is usually assigned to the southern hemisphere; but from our latitude we can see many of the most brilliant stars belonging to the southern portion of the sky,—Sirius, Rigel, Spica, Antares, Fomalhaut, and the belt of Orion being all south of the equator. The celebrated Southern Cross, however, we cannot see, and this is certainly a beautiful constellation; but the Great Bear, always visible in our country, is also very brilliant and marked, and thus we have invariably a fine constellation

to look at, although we can never see the Cross. That, however, which we miss, is the wonderfully clear atmosphere of the south, which, at times, seems so to magnify and reveal the glories of the heavens, that our minds seem to partake of the influence, and to be purified from the earthly clouds that usually hang over them ; and thus, leaving terrestrial thoughts behind us, we ascend the mountain peaks of our imagination, and are soon lost in wonder and admiration as we gaze at the endless millions of suns that scintillate and glitter in the heavens around us.

THE LOVER'S WISH.

I WOULD not be the rose that blooms
Where gay parterres are spread,
Nor yet the rosy wreath that twines
Round beauty's graceful head.

No ! let me be the rose that wins
A glance and smile from thee
When none are by, thy beating heart,
Thy blushing cheek, to see :

Long treasured for the giver's sake
When nature's charms are past ;
And claiming still, though dry and sere,
A fond look to the last.

CAROLINE KING.

THE OWLS' TOWER.

A STORY OF BRIGANDS.

"It is now your turn, captain," said De Saulcy, emptying, at a single draught, the glass of Chambertin that he had held in his hand for some seconds, and which the unexpected *dénouement* of a story to which he had been listening had almost made him forget.

"Gentlemen," replied I, endeavouring to parry the thrust as best I could, "the current of my existence has hitherto flowed in so calm and tranquil a manner, that in the whole course of my past life I do not recollect one solitary fact worth relating to you."

As I expected, these words were received with energetic protestations from all the guests, more or less heated by the copious libations of a festivity which had already lasted more than six hours. It was in vain that I attempted to offer excuses amid the hubbub of entreaties and reproaches that were showered upon me from all sides. At length, despairing of coming victorious out of this contest, where vigour of lungs was certainly not on my side, I adopted the course of putting an end to it by subscribing to the wishes of the honourable company.

I had no sooner made known my resolution, than silence was re-established as if by enchantment. Glasses were replenished, every head was turned towards me, every look fixed upon me, and I commenced my recital with the flattering conviction that I was listened to, if not with interest, at least with attention.

"Gentlemen," said I, lighting my cigar, and throwing myself carelessly back in my chair, "towards the close of 1818, business of importance summoned me to Spain, and compelled me to take up my abode for nearly a year in Andalusia.

"At this period I was scarcely three-and-twenty. Instead of confining myself to Cadiz, the streets of which are narrow and filthy beyond description, I hired a pretty little rural villa at Puerto-Réal, a coquettish town, the houses of which, built of stone of a dazzling whiteness, are pierced by an infinite number of windows, behind whose venetian blinds you are pretty certain, at any hour of the day, to catch a glimpse of the sparkle of a pair of black eyes, or the smile of a rosy lip.

"Hence the time passed with me in the most agreeable manner in the world. Neglecting my affairs rather more than I ought to have done, I had managed to form some agreeable acquaintances; in a word, I thought only of enjoying myself.

"Two or three times a week I, however, managed to tear myself, though with regret, from my delicious retreat, and, mounted on a magnificent Spanish barb, tore at full gallop across the three leagues that separate Puerto-Réal from Cadiz, and inquired into the state of my affairs; more, it must be confessed, with the view of ascertaining how much longer I

should be permitted to enjoy the charming life I had organized for myself, than out of respect for the grave interests that were confided to me.

"Well, gentlemen, I was in the very heyday of youth, and at that period of life pleasure has such charms.

"At that time there was much talk of a certain José Maria, who had long scoured the country as leader of a band of brigands, and who, after having made his peace with the Government, had retired to Cadiz, his native city, to enjoy, in honourable (?) tranquillity, the fruit of his past rapine.

"The feats of unheard-of audacity related of this ex-brigand had awakened in me a lively curiosity, and inspired me with the most ardent desire to find myself face to face with him.

"One morning I received a letter from one of my boon companions, Don Torribio Quésada, which informed me that that very evening, at Cadiz, the renowned José Maria was to dine with him, and entreating me not to lose the opportunity that presented itself for me to meet him and converse with him at my ease, by coming to share the repast to which he had invited the ex-brigand.

"Jumping with joy at this unexpected news, I immediately ordered my horse to be saddled, and galloped off to Cadiz, countermanding all the orders I had previously given to my servant for this day's amusements.

"Two hours later I was comfortably installed in Don Torribio's dining-room.

"José Maria was punctual to the appointment.

"He was exactly the sort of man that I had pictured to myself: just such as, in my excited imagination, I had pleased myself with representing him; and the few hours that I passed in his society flew by, for me, with the rapidity of a dream, so vividly was I impressed by hearing him recount, in his deep and vibrating voice, the moving vicissitudes and hair-breadth 'scapes of his adventurous life.

"We were at length obliged to separate. José Maria quitted us after drinking a parting cup of *val de peñas*, and warmly shaking hands with us.

"When I found myself alone with Don Torribio, the latter endeavoured to persuade me to pass the night with him, for it was growing late, and I was three leagues from Puerto-Réal.

"The dinner had been a luxurious one; and a considerable number of empty bottles, ranged more or less symmetrically on the table, testified to the fact that the evening had not passed with exemplary sobriety.

"I felt my head heavy; I had smoked a good deal, and without being intoxicated, I had nevertheless considerably passed the bounds of strict temperance, and my disposition, naturally wayward and headstrong, experienced the effects of this little debauch; so that I remained deaf to all the entreaties of my friend, and although he pressed me strongly to

stay, representing the lateness of the hour, the length of the journey, and the insecurity of the roads, I persisted in setting out.

"Don Torribio, seeing that his remonstrances were of no avail, and that nothing could convince me, no longer opposed my resolution. We drank a parting glass together; I leaped upon my horse, which was impatiently pawing the ground at the door, and carefully wrapping myself in my cloak, I set spurs to his sides, and departed.

"The night was dark. Heavy black clouds, charged with electricity, hung in the sky; the atmosphere was hot and oppressive; large drops of rain began to fall; at intervals were heard the rumblings of distant thunder, preceded by flashes of lightning, the glare of which blinded my horse, and caused him to rear with affright.

"I painfully pursued my solitary road, my head full of the dismal stories which, during the whole evening, José Maria had never ceased relating to us, and my looks wandered uneasily around, endeavouring to pierce the obscurity, and forewarn me of the ambushes that might be laid for me by the numerous *caballeros de la noche* (gentlemen of the road), who at this period swarmed on all the highways of Andalusia.

"I was armed, and, notwithstanding my apprehensions, I had too often performed the journey between Cadiz and Puerto-Réal not to be able to form a pretty correct notion of what I had to fear; but on this particular night, my head crammed with a heap of stories, each more direful than the last, I was a prey to an unaccustomed terror. Of what was I afraid? I knew not; or rather, to speak frankly, I was afraid of everything.

"Meanwhile the weather had become detestable. The sky seemed changed into an immense sheet of flame; incessant flashes of lightning shed a lurid and fantastic glare around, the rain descended in torrents, and at length the storm, which had been for a long time threatening, burst forth in all its fury.

"My horse stumbled at every step in the midst of this general convulsion of nature, and I was obliged to watch him most carefully, in order to avoid being thrown off in the mud.

"I was literally drenched with the rain, and I cursed my headstrong folly, which had led me to refuse the obliging offer of Don Torribio, to grope my way thus in the middle of the night along desolate roads, at the risk of breaking my neck twenty times over. At length, and just as I was at my wit's end what to do, I bethought me of an old ruined mansion, which could not, at the present moment, be very far off, and which would, at least, afford me a temporary shelter from the tempest.

"I endeavoured, as best I could in the darkness that surrounded me, to discover my exact whereabouts, and a few seconds sufficed to bring me within the shelter of this hospitable roof.

"It was an old tower, the remains of some feudal manor, which in the course of time had gradually fallen into decay. It was deserted—almost in ruins—and now served as a retreat for the birds of night. The

people of the country round called it, and no doubt call it to this day, *The Owls' Tower*,—a name which it in every respect deserved.

"I alighted, and throwing my bridle over my arm, I entered, followed by my horse, a vast apartment, at whose gloomy and sinister aspect I was seized with an involuntary dread.

"By what fatality I know not, all the strange stories related concerning this spot suddenly recurred to my diseased imagination with a vivacity and force that caused a shudder to run through my veins; and it was with real anxiety that I cast my eyes around this dismal abode, that was to serve me as a domicile for perhaps several hours.

"As I have told you, gentlemen, I found myself in a vast apartment, comprising the whole extent of the tower. It was pierced by narrow windows, long since denuded of their shutters, and through the broken panes of which the rain, driven by the wind, streamed in torrents. At the bottom, a rotten staircase rose spirally, conducting to the upper stories. In one corner a heap of rubbish, of all sorts, was piled up to the vaulted ceiling, and seemed not to have been disturbed or touched for at least a century.

"But what really alarmed me the most was to see burning in the midst of the apartment a fire composed of sticks and logs of wood.

"Who, then, were the tenants of this abode?—where were they? Not wishing to adventure rashly into this cut-throat den, I retraced my steps, and looked about carefully on all sides; but the night was too dark to render it possible for me to discover anything. I listened in vain. No sound met my ears save the furious howling of the wind, unmingled with any human sound.

"Somewhat reassured by this silence and this solitude, I determined to make the tour of the old fortress. My researches were without result, except that I discovered something in the shape of stabling, in which I installed my horse.

"Then, convinced that I was for the present, at least, the only inhabitant of the tower, and that, consequently, I had nothing to fear, I re-entered the apartment. At the same time, not desiring to be taken by surprise, I determined not to stop there, but to ascend to the upper story, which resolution I immediately put into execution.

"As near as I could judge, in the midst of the thick shadows in which I was plunged, this apartment exactly resembled the one I had just quitted. The same ruined condition, the same pile of rubbish in one corner, and even the same rotten staircase conducting to an upper story. In order not to be taken unawares without the means of defence, I carefully inspected the priming of my pistols; then, wrapping myself in my cloak, and recommending my soul to God, I laid myself down close to the stairs, so as to be ready for any event that might happen, and with the resolution to keep awake; but what with fatigue and wine combined, I felt my eyes closing in spite of me; my ideas became gradually con-

fused, and I was on the point of yielding to slumber, when all at once the sound of footsteps aroused me from my torpor, and brought me thoroughly to myself.

“About a dozen persons had just entered the tower.

“From the spot where I was lying, by slightly raising my head, it was possible for me to see without being seen.

“The intruders were swarthy-complexioned, dark-visaged fellows, with stalwart limbs, habited, for the most part, in the rich and fantastic costume of Andalusia. They were armed to the teeth, and were seated round the fire, on which they had thrown two or three logs, conversing eagerly together, all the while casting, at intervals, longing looks upon two large chests which they had deposited in a corner.

“The first words I overheard left me no room to entertain the slightest doubt as to the nature of their profession. They were *saltadores*; in other words, highway robbers; and they belonged to the troop of Nino, a celebrated brigand chief who had succeeded José Maria, and whose name had already become the terror of all Andalusia. Their gestures were animated. At times they laid their hands upon their weapons.

“I thought I understood that they could not agree respecting the division of the booty contained in the trunks. The dispute ended by becoming so warm, that I foresaw the moment when these wretches would proceed to cut each other's throats. They had risen tumultuously, knives were drawn, and they were measuring each other with inflamed looks, when suddenly their leader appeared amongst them.

“El Nino was at this period a man of about forty, of tall stature and muscular frame. His broad shoulders and brawny arms denoted the possession of extraordinary vigour; his features were broad, and the expression of his countenance ferocious; the fantastic reflections of the fire, flickering upon his face, gave to his physiognomy a character rendered still more strange by the sardonic smile that played upon his thick and fleshy lips.

“‘Ever quarrelling! ever disputing!’ said he in a brief, harsh voice: ‘death! cannot you live together in harmony, like honest bandits?’

“One of the brigands hazarded a justification, which Nino immediately interrupted.

“‘Silence!’ said he; ‘I will not hear a word. Here you are dawdling round the fire like so many senseless monks, and thinking no more of our common safety than if we were alone in the world! Fortunately, I am always on the watch. What has become of the man to whom the horse which I found in the stable belongs?’

“At these words I was seized with an involuntary shudder, and reflected with terror on the fearful position in which chance and my evil destiny had placed me. In truth, this position began to be most critical; I was literally in a mousetrap; no means of escape presented themselves, and I inwardly recommended my soul to God, at the same time promising myself to sell my life as dearly as I could to these ruffians, with whose

ferocity I was too well acquainted to entertain the least doubt as to the fate that was reserved for me in the event of my falling into their hands.

"Meanwhile, the brigands, stunned at the discourse of their leader, had hastily seized their pistols and carbines.

" 'We know not where the man of whom you speak can be,' said one; 'on our arrival here the tower was deserted.'

" 'That may be,' replied Nino; 'but at all events let two of you go and search around this old owls' nest; he is probably concealed somewhere about.'

"Two men went out, and the captain commenced pacing the apartment with long and rapid strides while impatiently awaiting their return.

"At the end of a few moments they came back.

" 'Well?' demanded he.

" 'Nothing,' replied the two bandits. 'The horse is still in the stable, but of the rider there is no trace.'

" 'Hum!' said the captain. And he resumed his walk.

"A silence as of death reigned in this apartment, an instant before so noisy.

"I ventured to draw a long breath, imagining that all immediate danger was past for me. I was mistaken.'

"In a few minutes the captain stopped.

" 'Have you searched the interior of the tower?' demanded he.

" 'No,' replied the bandits. 'What would be the good? No man would be mad enough thus to rush into the lion's mouth.'

" 'Who knows?' murmured the captain, shaking his head. 'Perhaps the man whom we seek was here before you, and on hearing you come, not knowing with whom he might have to deal, and seeing his retreat cut off, he has mounted to the upper stories; at all events, let us look. In our profession two precautions are better than one.' And, followed by his men, El Nino directed his steps towards the dilapidated staircase.

"I immediately ascended to the second story. I was not long before I heard the noise made by the brigands searching and ferreting in every corner.

" 'Nothing!' said the voice of the captain; 'let us look higher up.'

"The tower had but two stories, and terminated in a platform, upon which I arrived breathless, and a prey to the most profound terror.

"I beheld myself lost, irrevocably lost. I was beyond the reach of human aid; I ran wildly up and down; I rushed like a wild beast round and round this horrid platform, beneath which yawned a precipice of more than a hundred feet.

"My teeth chattered fit to break, a cold sweat inundated my face, and my whole body was seized with a convulsive trembling.

"I heard on the stairs the footsteps of the bandits, rushing like bloodhounds in pursuit of me, and I calculated with a shudder how many seconds yet remained to me.

"At length, rendered mad with fear, I resolved to throw myself head-long down the precipice sooner than fall alive into the hands of those miscreants, who, I knew, were accustomed to subject their victims to frightful tortures, for the purpose of extorting rich ransoms.

"Mechanically, before accomplishing my dreadful purpose, I leant my head out, no doubt for the purpose of ascertaining the depth of the abyss into which I was about to plunge.

"I then for the first time perceived, about two feet below me, an iron bar, about three feet in length and an inch and a half in thickness, fixed in the wall of the tower, and extending horizontally in the form of an arch. What purpose had this iron bar formerly served? I lost no time in conjecturing at such a moment. A sudden idea had flashed into my mind, and inspired me with the hope of escaping the assassins who were pursuing, and were on the point of discovering me.

"Time pressed; I had not a minute to lose; I therefore, without further hesitation, strode over the edge of the platform, and seizing with both hands the iron bar, I suffered my body to drop down, and thus, suspended in empty space, I awaited the chance of events.

"Scarcely had I taken up this perilous position, when the bandits rushed tumultuously out upon the platform, which they examined on every side.

"The storm still continued to rage, the rain poured incessantly, the wind blew a perfect hurricane, and dazzling flashes of lightning at intervals rent the skies.

"'You see, captain, there is no one,' exclaimed the brigands.

"'That is true,' replied the captain, in a tone of mortification.

"'Come, let us go down,' said one of the robbers; 'it is not very pleasant here.'

"'Let us go down,' replied the captain.

"A sigh of relief escaped from my overcharged breast at these words, which proved that the brigands, convinced of the inutility of their researches, were at last about to withdraw.

"I was saved!

"From the bottom of my heart I thanked God for the un hoped-for aid He had afforded me in my distress, and prepared to reascend to the tower.

"My position was far from being an agreeable one, and now that the danger was past, I experienced an indescribable sense of suffering in the wrists and arms; and I know not whether it was illusion or reality, but it seemed to me as if the bar of iron to which I was clinging, too weak longer to support the weight of my body, and no doubt eaten with rust, was about to give way, and was surely, though slowly, bending over the fatal abyss.

"I must hasten, then. The most complete silence reigned at the summit of the tower. I raised my head to calculate the distance that separated me from the top of the wall. The captain, carelessly leaning

over the edge of the platform, fixed upon me his fierce eyes as he regarded me with an ironical smile.

"'Ha! ha!'" said he.

"'Demon!'" I exclaimed, furiously.

"Without making any reply, El Nino leant forward to seize me. Letting go with one hand the bar that supported me in mid-air, I took one of the loaded pistols which I had placed in my belt.

"'You will not escape me, friend,' said the bandit, with a coarse chuckle.

"'I will kill you!'" I murmured, taking aim at him with my pistol.

"At this moment I felt the bar almost insensibly bending beneath my weight; my hand slipped, I let fall my weapon, and by a supreme effort I succeeded in again clutching with both hands the accursed bar, which I fully expected to give way every moment.

"'Ah!'" I exclaimed, despairingly, 'anything rather than such a death;' and, collecting myself with a superhuman effort, I was preparing to make a spring to reach the top of the wall.

"'No,' said the captain, with a harsh and stridulous laugh; 'you shall die there like a dog,' and he pushed me back.

"Then ensued a moment of indescribable horror, of unutterable anguish. The bar, it was too evident, was incapable of sustaining much longer the weight of my frame.

"In spite of my frenzied and desperate efforts, I felt my stiffened fingers relaxing their hold; I heard an infernal burst of laughter, uttered, no doubt, by the bandit, who was enjoying my purgatory. Then hope deserted me, and I closed my eyes to shut out the frightful abyss into which I was on the point of being precipitated, and——"

"Well?" exclaimed all my auditors, whose imagination was worked up to the highest pitch, and who were at a loss to imagine why I stopped.

"And I awoke, gentlemen," continued I; "for all this was but a dream. Heated by the numerous libations of the evening, I had fallen asleep on leaving Cadiz, and, my head full of the romantic stories to which I had been an attentive and eager listener, I had dreamt all that I have just related to you. My horse, fortunately for me, had not fallen asleep, and knew his way by heart, so he had very quietly conducted me to my house, at the door of which he stopped. That action awoke me with a start, and, Heaven be praised, relieved me from the horrible nightmare by which I had been oppressed for more than two hours."

C. SICARD.

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEFRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.

A FEMALE "SAGE SERENE AMIDST A CRUMBLING WORLD!"

If the life of Camille Le Tellier had been as dear to him as his own, Mr. Behringbright could not have watched and laboured at its preservation with more indefatigable zeal than he devoted to the purpose during the ensuing hours in which it trembled in the balance it had been so unfairly cast into between time and eternity. The maltreated Romeo himself—though inclined at first to doubt and suspicion of the motives of all around him—became at last sensible of the kindness of his Tybalt, and in the midst of the horrible agonies he suffered, heaped thanks and blessings on his friendly rival's head.

Distrusting the skill—perhaps, even the fair play—of Dr. Bucktrout between death and his niece's victim, Mr. Behringbright called in the assistance of the two medical men he had formerly conveyed to Glengariff Castle, and who had the best reputation for their science in Killarney. These gentlemen were very willing to oblige so liberal a fee-master, and exerted themselves to the utmost in a stand-up conflict with the skeleton that brandishes the ice-tipped dart; not yielding an inch without the extremest pressure, and as often as they lost ground, regaining it, by the most desperate antidotal exertions. They really thought Camille must be the millionaire's dearest friend.

"Save me this man's life, and I shall consider no reward too great!" he frequently exclaimed, when he imagined there was any slackening of zeal or effort. "A hundred pounds apiece, gentlemen, if you save me this one man's life!"

But there were other spectators who arrived to be witnesses that thenceforth Monsieur Le Tellier—obscure foreigner as he was, obscure hole and corner as was the "Red Herring" tavern—had fair play there for his life. Two of the constabulary force of the county of Kerry were stationed by his bedside *en permanence*, and quite a little crowd of magistrates bustled in and out continually, watching the result of this strange affair, who had been all placed on the alert by the frantic denunciations and demands for aid of Olympe Loriôt. This ex-beloved of Camille Le Tellier in fact fancied if she did not make matters pretty clear at once, she ran a very considerable danger of figuring as the murderess herself. The apothecary also, who had sold the poison, seized with great alarm on ascertaining the state of the law from a benevolent neighbour, an attorney, who communicated it gratis rather than miss the oppor-

tunity of completing the poor man's panic—the apothecary arrived, with a thousand apologies, and all the possible antidotes he could discover in a hasty flinging over of the leaves of the Dublin “*Pharmacopœia*,” to the sufferer's bedside.

And who shall say that even cheating does not work for good in this best of all possible worlds?—since, had not the arsenic sold by that well-to-do, sleek-ribbed, regular-place-of-worship-frequenting apothecary, and father of a family, been wonderfully adulterated by a large admixture of pulverized lime, the liberal dose administered to Camille Le Tellier must inevitably have produced the effect intended.

As it was, he had a terrible struggle for existence; and he was several times so very like making an end of it, that Sir Patrick Kilrush, Deputy Lieutenant, and Justice of the Peace for the Killarney district, was for making out a warrant at once for the apprehension of the party accused in the incessant lamentations and outcries of Mademoiselle Loriôt. But Mr. Behringbright prayed so earnestly for some forbearance yet, and Lord Glengariff seconded him so zealously, and the doctors still spoke so hopefully, unwilling to relinquish their promised splendid fee, that the resolution was suspended. But meanwhile a constable, of that milder and less externally terrific class known as a detective, kept constant watch and ward over Prospect Palace—at least, on one of its fairest inmates, who, however, according to all accounts, appeared to be entirely unconscious of the extraordinary circumstances that collected daily crowds round the “Red Herring” tavern: took her walks, drives, and boatings quite as usual, attended by a whimpering and affrighted old woman, who, under her powerful control, was obliged to go through the same farce, and—at a respectful, but duly vigilant distance—by the aforesaid functionary in plain clothes.

But it is useless to linger over these details. Let me admit fairly at once that Camille Le Tellier—unlike the hero of a somewhat similar romance of reality, with whom some foolish people will persist in confounding personages and events that have very little other relation than a chance resemblance—in spite of his vision of the wraith—in some degree, perhaps, in consequence of it—recovered from his formidable attack. That is to say, he did not absolutely die of it; but he was reduced to a pitiable extremity of weakness, could not swallow anything but spoonmeat for weeks, and had the beauty on which he prided himself so much very seriously diminished, by the loss of his hair, his nails, and a considerable portion of the skin of his face and chest.

All the time of this momentous cure Mademoiselle Olympe continued as passionately devoted to her *ci-devant* lover as could possibly be evinced by howls over his unhappy destiny, and imprecations on his murderer. Really, I almost think she was sorry he did not die, so anxious and determined was the fond, forgiving woman to avenge him!

Camille, nevertheless, exhibited so little gratitude for so much unex-

amplified magnanimity of affection and generosity, that the first use he made of sufficient strength of voice and clearness of mind being restored to him to express his wishes, he implored Mr. Behringbright to remove "that figure of Alecto, that nightmare of a *funeste* recollection!" from his sight.

Mr. Behringbright complied with the request in his own way. When the doctors had come to an agreement that Monsieur Le Tellier would not die, he requested to speak with Mademoiselle Loriôt for a few moments alone.

He communicated to her then, in a few brief, stern words, how the fact stood, in respect of Monsieur Le Tellier's sense of her devotion, and went on to say, "You have a ring of mine, woman, of great value in your possession, and—"

"Yes," interrupted Mademoiselle, with a vehemence due no doubt to the noblest conviction of her duty; "and I retain it as an irrefragable piece of evidence, which, in the interests of justice and of society, I propose to keep in security until their severity is satisfied!"

"Make certain, then, that the lash of the law shall writhe the sharpest around your own person, *woman!*" continued Mr. Behringbright, who really seemed to think this designation quite a term of condemnation. "But I rather advise you to accept it as a gift which I confer upon you—on certain conditions!"

"Ah! you speak reasonably now, Mr. Behringbright! But do not fear that I require a bribe to bear every imaginable evidence against that worst of women. The ring, I am assured, is worth a thousand pounds."

"It is worth more than that sum—much more! and it is yours, I repeat, on certain conditions."

"Mine! A thousand pounds and more! Name them."

"That you never open your lips again on this horrible occurrence, and that you quit the British dominions within twenty-four hours, and never return to them!"

"To the latter, willingly, yes; but for the former! What, suffer that *atroce* to escape the due punishment of her crimes! *Non, jamais!*"

"Then I send the police at once to obtain the restoration of my jewels! But I do not intend *she* shall escape the 'due punishment of her offences,' nor *he* either! My ring is worth two thousand pounds, I repeat!"

"If you promise me their punishment, Mr. Behringbright?—both their punishment?"

"I do, most solemnly."

"I can trust in your word, Mr. Behringbright. But to tell you the truth, I have already forwarded this piece of evidence, for security, to Paris. Give me ten pounds also, then, to convey me thither, and I abandon for ever this land without taste, this man incapable of a generous sentiment—of any possible return upon himself!"

Mademoiselle Loriôt accordingly departed from Killarney, attended

with no particular blessings on the part of those whom she had most laboured to serve and benefit. Such is the fate of goodness, even in its most direct manifestations, in our hard, unbelieving age. I am not, however, of opinion that Mademoiselle really proceeded to Paris in the speedy manner she had promised. Her relations with Monsieur Carlier were not at that time all that could be wished; and a jewel of so much value, in her hands, at Paris might have excited attention elsewhere than in the jewellers' shops. Besides, to say truth, the susceptibility of a nature "open as day" to tender impressions had been awakened in Mademoiselle's bosom by the engaging personal characteristics, the freedom of manner and conversation, the favourable reports he gave everywhere of his own position in society and tangible allotment of dollars, of Mr. Flamingo Brown, the American. And as this gentleman was suddenly summoned home at about the same period—or, at least, to that part of his home called New York, where, the civil war having broken out, some excellent contracts offered themselves to speculative industry—Mademoiselle Lorient took the whim to ship herself at Liverpool in his society. To be sure, motives more sensible and substantial had probably their weight with Olympe; for Mr. Brown assured her, with irresistible eloquence, backed by any amount of figures, that he would and could turn the worth of her fine ring, in a few months, into a splendid fortune *for her*. I know for certain that they sold it together in London, for exportation to St. Petersburg.

This was the first and a very efficient commencement of a series of countermoves against justice in the case that finally resulted in a complete checkmating of that purblind player.

On recovering his faculties sufficiently to be catechized on the subject, Monsieur Le Tellier refused to make any charge against any one in aught relating to his illness. Mr. Behringbright's two doctors held their peace; and Dr. Bucktrout declared, night and day, that his patient was suffering under a violent fit of indigestion, although he strongly suspected, in addition, that some stewed mushrooms he had partaken of at dinner with a friend on the day of his seizure had, in reality, been a mess of the poisonous fungus, vulgarly called toadstool, gathered by mistake. The magistrates, and the police and people in general (including all London), who scented some delightfully horrible revelation at hand, were thrown at fault. But there was no remedy for it, since the injured party himself refused to declare any aggrivement. Finally, police and magistrates and all retired discomfited from the field, even withdrawing their secret official in a huff from his post of constant surveillance on the suspected person.

Certainly this was a most Christian-like procedure on the part of Monsieur Le Tellier, especially considering the damage he had sustained in personal appearance. But he had his mundane motives, too; or else, could the influence Mr. Behringbright established over his mind, and exerted in this merciful sense, be due to the weakness consequent on his dangerous

illness, or the better incentive of gratitude for so much totally undeserved kindness?

A mixture of motives—mostly are the threads of light and darkness mingled with all of us, poor mortals, in our guiding influences—probably swayed with Camille Le Tellier, in thus submitting himself to the decrees of Mr. Behringbright. For it is certain that gentleman stood forward on the occasion as the guardian genius of Madeleine Graham, in saving her from the consequences of her rash interference with the regular movements of destiny, in the disposal of the lives of inconvenient men.

Why did he so? He could not, surely, affect to disbelieve in Madeleine's guilt; the evidence was so very clear. In private, his doctors assured him their patient had been *poisoned*; he was a witness himself of his great agonies, and that he presented all the symptoms of the kind of poison indicated in the denunciations of Olympe; the admission of the apothecary; the signature of the names in the latter's honest books! The certainty that Madeleine had alone remained in possession of the deadly drug—the dinner to which the unfortunate Camille had been invited at so much risk of displeasure in other quarters—the incidents of the coffee—of the peculiar basin of powdered sugar—all which the Frenchman recalled to his recollection as soon as his first acute sensations were in some measure quieted by the skill of his medical allies—here was an abundant *corpus delicti*. The motives of the crime Mr. Behringbright—when he came to consider things, and piece circumstances together—could be at no loss to assign.

Olympe, on being questioned to explain her rhapsodical accusations, had made no further secret of any portion of her acquaintance and familiarity with Madeleine Graham. She felt justified to herself, by her wrongs in the affair, even to exaggerate the general naughtiness of their conjoint transactions. She put upon Madeleine the whole shabbiness and disgrace of that original meretricious design on the wealthy Behringbright at the St. James's Theatre. The friendship of the wicked is by no means that of Jonathan and David; it is a chain of mouldy hemp, that does not abide any rough strain. Flamingo Brown was another case in point, who, finding that all his overtures for a renewed friendly understanding in business matters with Mr. Behringbright went for nothing, or worse than nothing, threw off all restraint on the score of his tacit alliance with Miss Graham, and favoured the millionaire with a full, true, and particular account of his reasons to suppose that Camille Le Tellier had all along been her preferred lover, and the merchant's wealth alone the object of her seeming reciprocation of his tenderness.

Thinking over matters under the lights now presented to him, doubtless they adjusted themselves in very forcible and unpleasant "concatenations accordingly" to Mr. Behringbright. He remembered the fascinating glance of sudden selection on board the Belfast steamer; and it now occurred to him that there *was* an irrepressible look of recognition in

that first shock. Camille's otherwise unaccountable fixing of a quarrel upon him, however promoted by the malignant diversion Flamingo Brown had taken in fomenting it to a challenge, he had by no means forgotten. The Frenchman's stealthy entry into Sir Orange Graham's house next recalled itself forcibly to his mind; and he remembered that the original misdirection of his ideas on the subject was from the seemingly artless and careless explanation of Madeleine Graham.

Yet more startled and amazed at his own simplicity, the recollection struck him with what easy art Madeleine had announced her intention of an excursion to the Lakes of Killarney simultaneously with his own. Nothing could seem more natural, more spontaneous; nothing now seemed less so. All subsequent experience and revelation satisfied him of Madeleine's perfect governing power and supremacy in her family movements and arrangements. Dr. Bucktrout—Mrs. Bucktrout—if they were not exactly her *âmes damnées*, how blindly and earnestly the poor souls acted as stokers in the dark engine which Miss Graham drove along the sinuous line which was to lead her to high fortune.

But if anything had been wanting to Mr. Behringbright's complete *satisfaction*, besides all these links in the chain there were the letters of Madeleine to Camille, liberally scattered at his feet by the vengeful Olympe. Letters which I do not say that Mr. Behringbright could or ought to have refrained from examining, under the recommendation that had accompanied their broad-casting; but which Camille himself, on the first return of consciousness, entreated him to peruse.

Letters that affrighted Mr. Behringbright,—seeing how their passionate recklessness and overflow revealed indeed the most absorbing devotion and preference for the young man whom she had yet devoted to death, in the hope and resolution to secure the millionaire's wealth.

He was terrified, I say. He trembled at the terrific gulf he had escaped,—into which he saw another so frightfully precipitated. How likely was it—how infinitely still more likely—that the same or a worse fate might have been in store for him! Since she treated thus a man whom she had loved, what might she not have done in the end to a man whom she had never loved, and whose gold was her sole object in feigning to love?

Mr. Behringbright knew by himself how joyless a possession vast wealth was. What would it have been to this woman of all-craving, unsatisfied desires, when she had attained the worthless price of her crimes and betrayals?

For what related to Emily Maughan, Mr. Behringbright dared not think—dared not conjecture the cruel enormity of Madeleine's offences against her, lest he should lose all patience and pity for the reckless slanderess. Only he was convinced in general that whatever she had stated to Emily's disparagement was false, without a word of defence on the part of Emily herself. But Camille Le Tellier's assurances and full confessions, in moments when he imagined himself on the verge of death, left not a shadow of doubt upon the point.

Camille declared, and most truly, that his whole acquaintance with Miss Maughan consisted in her very proper and honourable, though firm and unflinching, reprobation of so much of his clandestine relations with Madeleine, as she was aware of, and her anxious, friendly efforts to break off the affair. He avowed that all he had subsequently done in regard to her—his proposals for Emily—were the insidious promptings of his treacherous real object, and that Emily herself was perfectly unacquainted with the whole nefarious, underhand transaction.

Mr. Behringbright listened to all this, and gave up the comprehension of his age.

Still, as far as in him lay, he determined, after many a sleepless night—many a long, painful reverie—to disentangle the terrible knot, without any rude rending of the involved skein. And this the rather, perchance, that his own heartstrings were woven into some of the subtlest tangled threads; for though I should be glad to do so, I cannot say that even the discovery of the vileness and perfidy of Madeleine Graham quite destroyed the effect of her elaborate spells. It very often happens, indeed, alas! that the nobler the heart betrayed—the less the reason it has to cherish the unworthy object,—the more powerful and clinging in the roots do the twined fibres adhere to their worthless convolution. A noble nature cannot, will not, dares not, bring itself to the true comprehension of the case. It is a kind of denial of God, and of the divinity of God in the human soul, to believe in such unfathomable faithlessness.

Still, neither could so clear and logical an intellect as Mr. Behringbright had long enjoyed and cultivated, refuse assent to the overwhelming array of proof and conviction.

Bitter, bitter, bitter hours, and even days, did Mr. Behringbright spend, holding a silent assize over all these mazed and crowding evidences.

It was unnecessary to summon the accused into court. It was one of those direct and unmistakable judgments, wherein, according to ancient traditions of legality, it was not needful to try a criminal,—when he was taken with a *red hand*.

Sometimes George Cocker Behringbright imagined he must have been bewitched. He, who had had such a wife, to believe in a woman again!

But he came at last to an anchor—to a decision. Perchance it still cost him a strange pang; but all the more for that did he determine on what should and must be done.

As soon as Camille Le Tellier was pronounced out of danger of his life, and that he had retrieved strength of mind and body to endure the discussion of his most momentous interests as a living man, Mr. Behringbright held a long conversation with him. For a considerable time they differed on an important point in the matters submitted for debate. At last Camille yielded to the kindly authority of his preserver, for so Mr. Behringbright might well be considered, since it is certain only the most

immediate and unremitting care and medical skill had saved Miss Graham's victim from so large a dose, even of adulterated arsenic.

Mr. Behringbright had then another still more earnest and eager discussion with Lord Glengariff, who also spent a good deal of his time at the "Red Herring," before he won him finally over to the opinion and resolution he had himself formed. Then Lord Glengariff proceeded, in company with Dr. Bucktrout, to Prospect Palace, where Miss Graham still remained, innocently unconscious of all that was going on everywhere else to her scandal and prejudice.

It is true that it was only that very morning the silent embargo on her movements, in the shape of the detective officer, had been removed,—a haunting observation whereof Miss Graham had been as well aware as any of those hapless offenders of the good old times, whose misdeeds attended upon them in visible bleeding apparitions to themselves, albeit unseen to all others. But she preserved more calm and *sang-froid* than Macbeth at his feast, and never took the least notice of her Banquo. I think she was not at all obliged or thankful to Rooney, honest fellow! when he rejoicingly informed her that he was quite sure that ugly fellow, Tim Riley, the detective, had been ordered to take his snout out of their potatoes.

"And so, as I tould the master, there would be no occasion to order you off the premises, Miss; for it would be sure to end, one way or another, in a day or two. And what signifies all the fine people turning up their noses, and vowing they wouldn't stay if you did? Never having been in throuble thimsilves, the poor, mane snakes, what can they know about it, to feel for another? And you not intruding at all upon their company, Miss, no more than if you were in a hiding in Connemara, but keeping your own and your poor aunt's, in your own rooms, and taking no notice of anything, no more than if there was nothing happening in life at all, than in the daisies of a churchyard to the poor sows below! And to hear Mistress Sparrowgrass talking as if your sleeping under the same roof could contaminate her big, raw-boned daughters, with no more sinse of iligance in them than the tongs in a grate! And to hear the silly young spalpeen belonging to them thanking his stars night and day you hadn't honoured him with your preference,—as if you would have thought the likes of a skinned rat's tail like him worth the expinse of a dose! It made me quite sick and sorry, it did, Miss, to hear them talk; and I'm glad the young man that's caused all the trouble has come round again; for, from all accounts that I hear, he was noways worth the disgrace of being hanged for; and even transportation is a thing I should not like incurring myself for such a poor vagabone!"

This artless sympathy was no doubt very consolatory. Rooney did unto others as he would have expected to be done unto if he had been a Ribandman, and obliged by lot to put some estate agent or tithe proctor comfortably under the sod from a hedge side. But Madeleine Graham

had been reared in a city, in city notions, and had finished her education at a select academy in London, where, after all, something was to be learned, if it was only respect for public opinion. She therefore felt the unpleasantness of her position, and the well-meaning Kerryman's consolations produced rather a contrary effect.

She was very uncomfortable indeed when the first rumours of discovery reached her ears. And yet, that dreadful night after the dinner-party she had imagined, in the culmination of her terror and remorse, that she would thankfully have resigned every possible advantage the deed was to secure to be made certain that she had failed in it. But when the tidings flew all over Killarney, at daybreak, of the strange and sinister event that had come to pass at the "Red Herring;" when it was known for certain that Olympe Lorient had applied for assistance to the magistrates and police; when her aghast aunt demanded explanations of the frightful enigma of her, for the first time in the language of authority and menace;—then Madeleine Graham haughtily refused to give any; professed herself most cruelly insulted by her aunt and her suspicions, and, shutting herself in her own room, meditated for a long time on the propriety, and even necessity, of extricating herself from her position in the only way that seemed to remain.

Suicide! Inflicting on herself the doom she had dared to meditate for another!

But it does not always happen that those who have the courage to inflict, have the courage to endure. It is strange how people who have spent, one may say, their whole lives making others miserable, resent the least retaliation. Who thrashes a tipsy wife with a more merciless arm than an habitual drunkard? The philosophy of it all lies in a nutshell: the criminal, whom self-love and selfishness have made so, dislikes retributory action and consequences in exact proportion to the intensity of those prompting and swaying influences radiating from *self*.

In short, Madeleine did not at all relish the idea of self-destruction. And this apart from all consideration in regard to a future existence, and the announced chastisement of offences therein. Perhaps she had no very distinct impression that any such were to be apprehended. Of course she had been brought up in all the proper general notions on the subject. But really these have not that practical influence on people's ideas, the way they are mostly taught, that would be desirable. At all events, Madeleine's notions of the inconvenience of depriving the world of her presence were strictly limited to this side of things; but even there alone they seemed insuperable. She shrunk from the idea of the physical pain she must suffer, I fancy, more than anything else; and what gate of death could she expect to open unjarringly to allow of her passage? Even from shame and detection so enormous and so absolute, she shrank to extricate herself at so dread a turnpike toll!

What she resolved upon was not without its fortitude and resolution,

nevertheless, and more in keeping with her proper tone of firm-mindedness and tenacity of purpose. She determined, come what would—in common parlance,—to *die game!* to own nothing, deprecate nothing; to go on exactly as if nothing had happened, and baffle her enemies' assaults—if any such were intended—by coolness and composure, rather than by any energetic action of repulse and refutation. Among her stores of French maxims for the regulation of life and manners, Madeleine very well remembered “*Qui s'excuse, s'accuse.*”

It was certainly the best policy. Very likely the policy she would have adopted if she had had the misfortune to succeed in her *grand coup*, and then to have been found out. She would have answered the most searching interrogative probings with perfect candour and simplicity; she would have told all her lies in the form of truths, and have stood at a bar of criminal justice in an attitude so elegant, and with a smile so full of the serenity of conscious innocence and harmlessness, that people would have believed her face against herself, in every other shape of conviction. And this is as it should be; such natures are so rare, that the general principles of humanity ought not to suffer infringement from their existence, and the power to appear innocent ought always to be taken in some sort as the actuality;—at least, such wise personages as judges and juries appear to think so; and what is the present writer that he or she should presume to differ?

Indeed, Miss Graham preserved so much of this noble *sang-froid* and determination, that she really frightened both her uncle and Lord Glengariff in the interview they now sought and obtained with her on the subject Mr. Behringbright had entrusted to their management. She inquired of Dr. Bucktrout, quite feelingly, whether the poor stupid Frenchman who had taken it into his head to commit *suicide*, because she had finally declined the offer of his nonsensical affections, was out of danger, as she should be quite uncomfortable if he died on so absurd an occasion? And of Lord Glengariff she asked whether it was thought, on the other hand, that the Frenchman's senseless, raving, jealous wife, or whatever she was, had attempted to poison the poor fellow?

Dr. Bucktrout, albeit unused to the melting mood, covered his face with his hat, and sobbed aloud behind that entrenchment; but Lord Glengariff significantly informed Miss Graham that the identity of the supposed murderess was proved by the numerous letters in the possession of Monsieur Camille Le Tellier; and thereupon concluded with a request on the part of Mr. Behringbright, which, after a few moments of profound reflection, Madeleine did not think proper to refuse. She accordingly put on her bonnet and shawl, and quietly accompanied the two gentlemen, in a close carriage, to the “Red Herring” tavern.

What was the nature of this grand determining argument addressed to the young lady, deserves, however, the honourable distinction of a separate chapter of explanation.

THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY, 1864.

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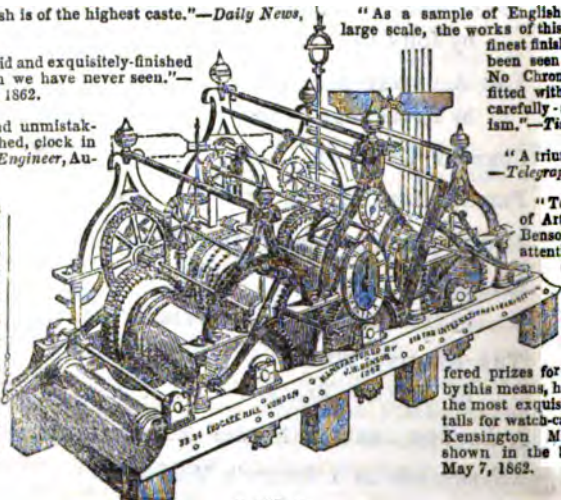
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THE MAN IN CHAINS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SACKVILLE CHASE."

CHAPTER V.

VISCOUNT MONTALBAN AND HIS DAUGHTER AT HOME.

VISCOUNT MONTALBAN lived in Park Lane, in a row of houses that were not particularly attractive outside, but which were, nevertheless, very commodious, very comfortable, and very compact within. The best part of the house looked into the Park, and yet it did not appear to be the front of the house. Indeed, it seemed to have no front at all, for the principal entrance was situated in a back street; and this arrangement probably made the interior of the house the more charming, by the agency of contrast. Entering the house from the back street, and going into the chief reception-room, was like stepping from the pent-up town at once into the free and glorious country; for there were green creeping plants in trellis work outside the house on the side that faced the Park, and out beyond were the spreading elms, and smooth, green turf, the flower-beds and fountains of that bright oasis which is the glory of western London. From the windows of the house the intervening road was not visible, for there was between it and the thronged thoroughfare a kind of terrace, beneath which were mysterious chambers, that might be dungeons, or sculleries, or vaults, or anything else that a lively or a morose fancy might picture on the mind's tablet; and these mysterious chambers abutted on the road, and shut it out from the windows that opened on to the terrace that was formed by the flat roof which covered them, so that from the interior the Park looked like pleasure-grounds attached to the house itself.

It is in one of these rooms that Lord Montalban and his daughter are seated at the open windows ; each employed in watching the moving figures that are out upon the Park, and are crossing it in all directions. The scene is constant and never-varying in that particular spot ; save when a regiment of soldiers is brought out there to drill, and then a temporary change is produced. The carriage drive between the trees and the Park makes the scene animated and interesting, for it is ever varying, although it is the same for ever in all its leading features. Lord Montalban is lounging in the window at one end of the room, and his daughter is seated at the window at the other end : there are four windows in the room, leading on to the terrace that abuts upon the public way. The two are gazing listlessly upon the scene the Park presents ; they are musing upon very widely different subjects, however. Perhaps, if Lord Montalban were asked on the moment to declare what he was thinking about, he would find it difficult to answer, or if he did at once answer, might do so inaccurately. His thoughts were roving and changing and revolving as it were around a centre, which would be found but ill defined in his own brain, if he were to concentrate his mind upon its elucidation. He was thinking of Abel Barnes and Marl Baskerville—at least, they were the staple of his thoughts ; and the idea had suggested itself to his mind, that if he were to witness the trial of the pugilist it would produce a new sensation, which it would be worth while to seek, and so he had resolved that he would be present on the interesting occasion.

Miss Montalban's thoughts were not so wandering as were those of her father, and were far more concentrated. They were stronger, too, in their effects, as evinced by the varying expression of the features which an observer might have detected. As she gazed lazily out upon the Park and its moving scenes, she was mentally amusing herself—or deluding herself, perhaps, would be the more accurate expression—in drawing two portraits, and they were so like each other that, as they came vividly upon her mind, fresh from the pencil of her fancy, she would contract her brow, and bite her lips, and frown. If it had been possible to photograph her thoughts, or the pictures that her thoughts produced, the result would have been a pleasing scene, albeit the effect upon Miss Montalban, as we have observed, was that of a clouded brow, and a general expression on her face which sometimes amounted very nearly to agitation. The scene that was in reality before her in the Park seemed to partake in her eyes of the character of a mental dissolving view, for her thoughts carried her away to a scene by the cover side, and miles away from any town ; and she would curl her lip in scorn, as at that cover side she, with her mind's eye, observed an arrival in that glittering gathering—the arrival of one who was so like herself, in figure, in face, and in attire, as to look like her second self. In her fancy she hears a ringing laugh, that with its joyousness has a sound of mockery, which is, or seems to be, addressed entirely to the imaginative listener, and it is then especially that her eye

dilates, and her lip curls, and there is a slight heaving of the bosom, which ordinary respiration does not necessitate or produce. For a moment she blurs the picture out, by flinging, with more than necessary energy, her long curls over her shoulders, and by changing her position as she sits; but still, as her eyes again sweep the scene that is really before her in the Park, her thoughts revert to her mental photograph, and the cover side is vividly before her again, and the laugh rings out again from that form that looks like her other self; and that imaginary laugh is the more galling now, as the mental photograph shows other figures—figures attired in the scarlet uniform that the fashion of the chase demands, and all grouped round her other self, and evidently charmed by it.

Fancy is indeed inexplicable, and in the case of Miss Montalban particularly so. What is the feeling that curls that lip, and fires that eye, and knits that brow, and throws a shade upon all that countenance? Is it jealousy? Is it pride? Is it offended vanity? It may be all those feelings commingled, and tinged with scorn, which almost invariably accompanies them in that strange anomaly, the human heart.

Miss Montalban rubs her eyes, but she cannot brush away that picture that her thought has uncontrollably produced, and through the real scene that is before her in the Park she still gazes upon it.

But both her own reverie and that of Lord Montalban were broken and dispersed by an announcement which heralded the appearance, in a few moments, of a gentleman who was proclaimed as the Marquis of Milltown. He was a young man only just of age, but he was a conspicuous member of the high life of London. He was acknowledged to be the most faultless dresser in the whole world of fashion; and yet he did not lead the fashions, he only followed them—conspicuously, it is true; but he illustrated, he did not create. He had never attempted anything like a strain upon his intellect, which from his youth upwards had always been delicate, not to say ailing, and which, therefore, had always been treated tenderly; and so anything like mental exertion had been studiously guarded against. The study, however, of his personal appearance had appeared to be very congenial to his mental organization. It was a matter to the development of which it had been discovered he could devote his undivided soul, without any great strain or tax upon his genius. He was an animated illustration of the fashion which came by the last post from Paris, and he was as well known in the haunts of fashion as that mighty figure which obligingly points the way that we should go down Constitution Hill.

It is ever thus. While the brilliant gadfly, flitting athwart the gay parterre, is being observed by admiring eyes, the eagle that is soaring into the skies is unperceived.

The Marquis of Milltown was the eldest son of the duke who was the noble kinsman of Viscount Montalban, and his portrait was conspicuous in photographers' glass cases, like the brightest page in the book of fashions. He believed that in his appearance he was possessed of irresistible power

over the female heart, and this feeling had led him into utter indifference upon the subject. He possessed the fascinating power; he had only to use it when it was wanted to minister to his desires. It is true that his intimacy with Miss Montalban had somewhat shaken this delightful belief, and he had once or twice been very near to the conclusion in his own mind that she was a peculiar girl; and if that impression had become a conviction in his mind, perhaps he would not have been in error. Miss Montalban was a peculiar girl. She had strong passions, which were easily roused. She had never known restraint; she had never entertained a desire that she had not gratified; and it is not surprising, therefore, that, amongst other failings, she should be a little self-willed. She had from a child evinced a strong predilection for horses, and she had taken quite as much interest in her father's career on the turf as he had himself; and when the stud was broken up, she shut herself in her room, and cried with vexation. It was the first trouble she had ever experienced, and she felt it sharply. She, however, speedily found relief, for she could indulge her predilection by watching the records of turf transactions, which she did studiously, and she speedily became an adept in the calculation of odds; indeed, she became attached to the study of mathematics, and she took especial delight in instructing her father how to make his book mathematically. If, therefore, the Marquis of Milltown had succeeded finally in arriving at the conclusion that Miss Montalban was a peculiar girl, his conclusion could have been scarcely considered an erroneous one.

The young Marquis entered the room in which Lord Montalban and his daughter were seated, and he moved across it like an elegant portrait that had slipped out of its frame, or, to use the more homely simile, he looked as though he had stepped out of a bandbox that had just been sent home from the man-milliner's. The patent leather of his boots was brilliancy burnished; his trousers might have been those of a statue, they looked so like carved work; his waistcoat was quite plain, but no hand but that of an artist could have produced it; and his surtout seemed to be a part of his figure, which was symmetrical, and all that could possibly be desired for outward show. His beard and moustache, both profuse, had evidently been cultivated and nourished with peculiar care and skill; and both were rich, and flowing, and soft, for they had never been rendered bristly by the agency of the barbarous razor. His hair was thick and wavy, and every young lady who knew him intimately, or by sight only, acknowledged that he was handsome. And so he was; there could be no doubt of it.

The Marquis, advancing to Lord Montalban, said, "Well, how d'ye do?" not in a lackadaisical tone, not in a mincing, certainly not in a hearty tone, but in a mild, beaming way, in which there was no energy, or anything like it, but which combined the free and easy with the inane. And then, turning to Miss Montalban, he simpered, "How d'ye do?" as he held out his gloved fingers to shake hands. And his was a very

peculiar shake of the hand. He managed to throw a kind of fervour into his fawn-coloured kid glove, which was a combination of the lover's gentle squeeze, the friend's sympathetic pressure of the palm, and the rapid action of the postman's double knock.

Miss Montalban had risen when the Marquis of Milltown entered, and she received him with a smile which seemed to melt into an undefined frown, that rather appeared to throw a shade over her face than to be a part of it. The young Marquis had never professed any love for her, and yet she knew—she felt that the young man had some sentiment of the kind, a feeling unknown directly to himself, but which, if she had chosen, she might have fashioned to any purpose she pleased. She had very little art about her at present, however. She had strength of purpose and of will, and she had never been thwarted in anything. She would not have understood it, therefore, if anybody had made a suggestion to her on the subject of the worldly advantage of winning a marquis. The Marquis of Milltown was in her eyes an empty nothing, a dressed-up doll, a marionette, anything without a soul; although he had one solitary redeeming quality in her eyes—he could ride well; but then, again, this solitary redeeming point was almost lost in the anxiety which he invariably displayed in the field to avoid all obstacles of danger, especially when the ground was muddy, lest an accident might spoil the appearance of his coat.

"I say, Montalban," he said, "I've just come across the Park, and they tell me they've made 'Peeping Tom' first favourite for the Goodwood."

"What, Drakengull's horse?" exclaimed Miss Montalban, with much animation.

"Ya-a-s, Drakengull's, who has been so devilish unlucky with all his nags."

"You mean the horse that ran at Epsom last year, and was knocked over the chains?" exclaimed Miss Montalban, eagerly.

"That's the one. They changed his name. You know he was called the 'Pop' then. Devilish bad name for a horse, I think;" and the Marquis of Milltown appeared rather languid after the effort involved in giving a definite opinion.

"Papa, you recollect that I said at the time, that was the best made horse I had ever seen in my life. If our stud had not been broken up"—and she said this with something like a sigh,—“we would have added him to it.”

"What, did you fancy him so much?" said the Marquis of Milltown, with a pleased smile.

"It's my belief that he would have won then but for that accident; and as he has been so long laid up in lavender, I don't wonder that they make him first favourite for the Goodwood Cup. Papa, we shall go, of course?"

"Of course, my dear. I've engaged myself to Templebloke, whose seat is in the neighbourhood."

"Oh, then we shall meet on the lawn," said the Marquis, in a tone of mild enthusiasm.

A footman here handed a card to Lord Montalban, who, glancing at it, said, "Show him up;" and as the lackey left the room, her father turned to Miss Montalban, and said, "Here's Baskerville, my dear, our commissioner."

At the same moment Mr. Baskerville was ushered into the room; but he seemed to have become an entirely changed man since the previous day. He walked totteringly, and his hands seemed to tremble as with incipient palsy; but a close observer might have discovered that his eye was as keen, his glance as penetrating, and his nerves as firm as when he met Abel Barnes in the justice-room at Guildhall. He bowed profoundly to Miss Montalban, who said,—

"A touch of your old complaint, Mr. Baskerville?"

"An old complaint indeed, Miss Montalban, and one that will remain with me to the end;" and he turned and smiled at Lord Montalban.

"Well, Baskerville, have you done anything in the matter of this poor devil?" inquired Lord Montalban, referring of course to Abel Barnes.

"The inquest was held last night, and a verdict of wilful murder returned—upon what grounds I am at a loss to understand, and so of course he must be tried. I have seen him this morning, and he has taken a strange fancy into his head,—these ignorant people often do take these strange fancies;—he has a strong desire to be defended by a young man who was present when the brother-in-law died, and who, it seems, has just been called in Gray's Inn. I tried to persuade him that it was a dangerous thing to entrust such a case to a young and inexperienced man, but he said he had a strange confidence in him, which he hoped I'd humour."

"Well, as far as that goes, I think one is as good as another, if the young man has a good case," said Lord Montalban.

"It's the good case that generally destroys a young man," said Mr. Baskerville.

"How do you mean?" Lord Montalban exclaimed, in surprise.

"It may sound strange to say so, but the sympathies of the court are generally on the side of the bad case. Law is often tortured in favour of the miscreant; it is never relaxed in the case of the innocent."

"Oh, that's cynical!" cried Lord Montalban.—"What do you say to that, Milltown?"

"Well, I don't know," said the young Marquis; "I suppose it's as Mr. Baskerville says, although, to tell you the truth, I never troubled myself about the question."

"Then you intend to retain the young man?" Lord Montalban said to Mr. Baskerville.

"Well, as your lordship says, perhaps we may as well; one may be as good as another. But I am going to see the gentleman this evening, and then I shall decide."

"Very good; and you must let me know when the trial comes on, as I intend to be present."

"Your lordship intends to be present?" cried Marl Baskerville, in a tone of great surprise, and for the moment forgetting his decrepitude.

"Yes. I'll see what perhaps may be the end of him," said Lord Montalban.

"I'll be sure to let your lordship know," said Baskerville. "Has your lordship anything to communicate this morning?"

"I have," broke in Miss Montalban. "You must go and execute a commission for me."

"Augusta, my dear!" exclaimed Lord Montalban.

"Yes, papa. I am determined to try my chance myself upon 'Peeping Tom,' for Goodwood. I feel a strong presentiment that he will win, and we will be there to see him."

"She must have her way, I suppose, Baskerville," said Lord Montalban, smiling; "and of course if she goes that way, I must go too."

"And I certainly will follow Miss Montalban," said the Marquis of Milltown. "What better lead could I have?" and he looked at Augusta Montalban with an inane smile, expecting that she would be delighted with the declaration; but she exhibited no such feeling, and so the mind of the young lord received the impression that Miss Montalban was a very grand creature, and that she would indeed be a splendid wife for him to choose. He felt quite struck with this idea, and therefore he did not attempt to follow up the conversation.

"And what shall the commission be?" inquired Baskerville.

"Suppose we split five hundred between us, eh, Milltown?" suggested Lord Montalban.

"I'm perfectly agreeable," replied the Marquis. But the idea occurring to his mind that in that expression he was complimenting himself, he said, "I mean, I'll go the five hundred with you."

"And what is my proportion to be?" asked Miss Montalban; but not waiting for any answer, she added, "But I won't have any proportion. There must be a separate transaction for myself. So, Baskerville, you will invest a hundred pounds for me."

Marl Baskerville looked inquiringly at Lord Montalban, who shrugged his shoulders, and said,—

"Oh, you must do it, I suppose."

"I will at once have the money put on," cried Baskerville, taking up his hat; "and this evening you shall hear from me respecting it, my lord."

"I'll go with you if you like, Baskerville. My cab's at the door," said the Marquis of Milltown, who felt that he could not much longer bear the interview, which had opened up a new sensation and impression

in his mind. "You look quite shaky," he said to Baskerville; "I'll drive you over."

"Your lordship is exceedingly obliging."

"Oh, there's one thing, you know," observed the young lord, at once destroying the apparent kindness of his offer; "I want to speak to you myself—I do indeed—something very particular." And he twirled his cane round with his finger, as a relief to his mind. "Good morning, Montalban. I hope I shall see Miss Augusta in the Row this afternoon. I haven't seen her on her new purchase."

This for a moment seemed to brighten Miss Montalban towards the young Marquis, and she exclaimed hastily,—

"Well, I'll be there, on purpose that you may see him."

The Marquis felt quite agitated; that splendid creature before him, who was so proud and unbending only two minutes before, had at length found out what all the world besides had known so well—that his appearance was irresistible.

Hasten him away, Marl Baskerville, or he will be rooted speechless to the spot for at least twenty minutes longer, and it is quite clear that Miss Montalban would not like that. Baskerville had no such impelling motive, but he did take the Marquis away, and in a few minutes afterwards this glass of fashion and mould of form was driving his magnificent stepper across the Park, with Baskerville seated in the cab beside him.

CHAPTER VI.

SILVESTER LANGDALE'S FIRST BRIEF.

SILVESTER LANGDALE has been reading the report of the inquest upon the man who was killed in the house in which Nicholas Darvill's usher had died, and he is flushed with something like indignation at the verdict which has been returned by the coroner's jury.

"Wilful murder!" he cries to himself; "why, how could the dolts have arrived at such a conclusion upon such evidence? Surely it will require but small skill or argument on the trial to relieve the man of such a charge." And then he rises, and paces the room hurriedly. "That wretched chamber and its emaciated tenant seem to haunt me," he soliloquizes; "and to think that such a tragedy as this should have followed poor Margale's death! That stalwart pugilist, too; I am sure he is to be pitied. There was nothing vicious in his countenance, as it appeared to me in the dim light of that fearful room; and he acted upon the instincts of a man in repelling the heartlessness of the wretch whose death he has caused. And that poor boy, so intelligent, so poorly clad, and yet evidently so carefully tended; and then poor Margale's sister. The whole scene appears to be the vivid remembrance of some distempered dream; but, alas! it is no dream, for it is an awful reality. What can I do for

them? Nothing. If I visited them, I could merely offer them—words. Nothing more. And of what value would words be to people in such a situation as theirs?”

There is often great value in mere words. “A soft answer turneth away wrath;” and words have sometimes a more potent influence upon the human mind than more substantial gifts. Words spoken kindly are a heavenly solace to the broken spirit; words of sympathy and goodness have the power often of lifting from the heart the pall that overwhelming trouble has thrown over it; and words are alone the balm that human aid can give when the spirit from its earthly penthouse is about to seek the awful mystery of the “undiscovered bourne.”

Yes; and when Silvester Langdale, in his implied regret, soliloquized that if he visited the family of Abel Barnes he could only offer them words, he was unconsciously enunciating that which might be the greatest boon that he could offer,—a boon to them—a boon to him—a boon, indeed, that should materially affect the future lives of all of them.

“Trial by jury,” he soliloquized still, “is one of the grandest of our grand old institutions; but it becomes blurred and stained by verdicts such as these.”

And then he paused, and pondered on the subject of his thoughts.

“I’ll write an indignant protest to the editor,” he exclaimed, as he took the newspaper up again. And then he hesitated. “No,” at length he said, “the press is sure to take up a case like this. They cannot pass it over.”

Silvester Langdale has just arrived at this conclusion when there is a knock at his door. It is sharp, sudden, and clear; and, in the agitation that he feels, for the moment it startles him. There could be no mistake. The knock was at his own door, and with a strange kind of hesitation he opened the door to see who had knocked thereat. He who had knocked was a tall man, with a bushy beard and moustache; and as Silvester Langdale opened the door the person stepped into the chamber, and said he presumed he had the honour of addressing Mr. Langdale.

Silvester bowed, and requested his unknown visitor to be seated.

The visitor took the chair that was placed for him, and said,—

“We are unacquainted with each other, Mr. Langdale, but it is possible that we may hereafter be thrown much together. You have only just been called, I think, Mr. Langdale?”

“Only in the last term,” replied Silvester, bowing.

“Yes, in the last term, I know. Then of course your practice has not been extensive as yet?” said his visitor, smiling.

Silvester Langdale said he had not even appeared in court yet; and he smiled too.

“Your present position is very different from mine,” said the stranger, “for I have had a very extensive practice.”

“Are you at the bar, then?” eagerly asked Silvester Langdale.

"No, I am not, but my profession is the law."

Silvester Langdale bowed, and said, "Oh, indeed."

"My name is Marl Baskerville."

Again Silvester Langdale bowed, with an expression on his countenance that plainly indicated that he was not acquainted with his visitor.

"You do not know me," said Mr. Baskerville. "You have not been much in London, I presume?"

"No, indeed, I have not," said Langdale, with a smile which may be said to have been apologetic of his want of experience of London.

"No, or I have no doubt you would have recognized the name of Marl Baskerville," said that gentleman. "I have been connected with the law for more than thirty years, Mr. Langdale; and I have seen young men like you rise into eminence, and assisted them thereto. I have seen men attain that eminence, and I have seen them topple down headlong from it, never to reach it again."

As Mr. Baskerville did not add that he had also assisted at this latter performance, the matter must therefore be supposed to be in doubt.

"But my practice has not been wholly in the law, although it has all tended thereto. I am come," Mr. Baskerville added, rather abruptly, "to place your foot, Mr. Langdale, on the first round of the ladder of your profession."

Silvester Langdale bowed quite profoundly this time, and his heart fluttered, for he was in the presence of that sacred personage, the first client. It is almost unnecessary to add that he felt slightly nervous.

"You are acquainted with a person of the name of Barnes?" said Mr. Baskerville.

"Barnes! Barnes!" repeated Silvester Langdale, and thinking for a moment. "No, I am not acquainted with any one of that name."

"Strange!" said Mr. Baskerville. "I cannot have made any mistake."

Silvester Langdale fervently hoped not, but he did not say anything.

"Abel Barnes, the pugilist, I mean," said Mr. Baskerville.

"Oh," exclaimed Silvester Langdale, recollecting who the person referred to was, "the unfortunate man who has been committed for murder."

"The same," said Mr. Baskerville.

"I did not recollect his name. In fact, I did not know it," said Silvester Langdale, "although I have but just read the report."

"You do not know him, then?"

"I had never heard of him until the night before last, when I was summoned to a scene in the wretched dwelling in which he resided which I shall never forget—never."

"Yes, I have heard it all from Barnes himself," said Mr. Baskerville. "It must have been a terrible scene."

"It was a scene that appears to have burnt itself into my memory. Poor Margale!"

"He was with you at school, I understand?" said Mr. Baskerville.

"He was an usher, a fellow-usher with me in the country."

"Well, he is gone," said Mr. Baskerville, "and it is of the living that I have to speak now. You seem to have made a wonderful impression upon Abel Barnes the pugilist."

"That is strange. I do not think that I exchanged a word with him," said Langdale, in a tone of surprise.

"These men are sometimes very impressionable," Mr. Baskerville observed. "I have seen a great deal of them; I have been thrown much amongst them. In fact, Mr. Langdale, I am the chief adviser of the fraternity."

And Mr. Baskerville smiled as he said this. Silvester Langdale smiled too, of course, but he did not know whether he ought to feel gratified at the communication which Mr. Baskerville had made to him with regard to his connections.

"I suppose," continued Mr. Baskerville, "that his brother-in-law must have talked to Barnes about you, Mr. Langdale, and so he had become prepossessed in your favour before he saw you."

"May I be allowed to ask to what this tends?" Silvester Langdale modestly inquired.

"I should have thought you might have guessed, Mr. Langdale," said Baskerville;—"and yet I don't know," he added, rather to himself than to Langdale. "No, I don't know how you should.—Well then, Mr. Langdale," he continued, rather rapidly, "you have observed that Barnes has been committed for wilful murder."

"A preposterous charge!" Silvester Langdale observed, with something like a flush of indignation.

"Very likely," Mr. Baskerville said, very calmly; "but the verdict has been returned, the indictment will be preferred, and Abel Barnes will be arraigned. He must, therefore, be defended."

Is Silvester Langdale agitated? He is. Anybody, with far less penetration than Mr. Baskerville possessed, would observe it. He breathes quickly, and his eyes glisten, and there is a visible, or almost audible, palpitation of the heart.

"I think you have a faint glimmering of the object of my visit, Mr. Langdale," observes Mr. Baskerville, with a peculiar smile.

"I think I have," Silvester Langdale says, but in a tone that is quite faint.

"Abel Barnes has expressed a strong desire that you, Mr. Langdale, should defend him," says Mr. Baskerville, with something like precipitation.

Silvester Langdale clutches the back of the chair that is near to where he is standing. The golden dream that has for three years been a glory to his life is opening in reality before him. It is not strange that he should be agitated.

"Do you think you will be equal to the task?" Mr. Baskerville inquires.

The question seems to rouse Silvester Langdale into energy, for he exclaims,—

"I have been reading that report of the inquest, Mr. Baskerville, and if good fortune had placed my opening case in my new profession in my own choice, it is the one I would have chosen; for it is one in which the greatest of our institutions has been tarnished. It is a libel upon it that I could have desired to repel. Wilful murder!—the verdict is a mockery."

"Your theme is a good one," remarked Mr. Baskerville, with the same coolness as before; "but you must not be too impulsive, or rather, perhaps, I should say, you must not be too confident. You cannot, probably, be too impulsive at the bar. Impulse goes a great way with juries, and so, indeed, does confidence, of a sort;" and Mr. Baskerville smiled significantly. "Recollect," he continued, "that you still have a jury to deal with."

"But I cannot believe that another such a jury can be found in the same month."

"Oh, entertain no such hope as that, Mr. Langdale. Why, in the interest of Abel Barnes himself I should not mind submitting his case in trial to the very same jury who have returned the preposterous verdict, as you have very properly designated it."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Silvester Langdale.

"You forget that this was a coroner's jury; there was no defence, no cross-examination, nay, even the accused himself was not present."

"True, true; that did not strike me," said Silvester Langdale.

"Indeed, Mr. Langdale, a young gentleman in your position, and with your prospects, might pray to have the same jury; for fancy the renown that you would gain by inducing the same jury to acquit the man upon his trial."

"Certainly, that would be a triumph for the advocate," said Silvester Langdale.

"Well, then, although you will not have the same jury, that is, the same persons, you will probably have precisely the same class of men; for a British jury would seem to be a distinctive class,—just as your county justices are," Mr. Baskerville said.

"You mean the juries of our criminal courts?"

"Yes, common juries, as they are called. And you think that Abel Barnes may entrust his defence to your hands, Mr. Langdale?"

"I have already said that such a case is that for which my ambition could have prayed," said Silvester Langdale.

"Very good. Then to-morrow I will obtain the depositions, and in the course of the next day, or the day after, I will send you your brief, Mr. Langdale."

The intimation thrills through the very heart of Silvester Langdale. The dream of young ambition is very alluring.

"And let me tell you, Mr. Langdale, that the ordeal that you will have to go through will be a trying one. You will be watched by cynically critical eyes. I believe, however, that you will be able to strike them powerless. They will be close around you; they will be in front of you, and they will be on each side of you. Their effect depends upon yourself. And you will have other eyes to watch you. The aristocracy of birth will be there, above you; and the judicial bench will be in judgment upon you before the bar, as well as upon those behind it. Abel Barnes's predilection may be but the agent through whose instrumentality inexplicable fortune works. From what I have seen of you, I believe it is, and I shall be glad to congratulate you upon it."

"Sir, I scarcely know how to thank you," said Silvester Langdale, warmly.

"Why should you thank me, Mr. Langdale?" said Marl Baskerville, rising from his seat and taking up his hat. "I am merely an agent. I have discharged a mission. You have nothing to thank me for, because I have no feeling in the matter, although—and, believe me, I never flatter any one, Mr. Langdale—I freely acknowledge that I can well understand Abel Barnes's prepossession. No, I have no feeling in the matter. My course of life, my profession, those with whom I have for so many years been thrown in contact, have thrust out from my heart what the world understands as feeling. I have but one feeling there, and that is my own, and is not that which the world understands by the term. Good day, Mr. Langdale. I will send you your brief, and I shall probably see you again frequently."

And the next minute Marl Baskerville was descending the staircase.

Silvester Langdale stands in the centre of the chamber for a few moments, almost bewildered. The interview that he has just had with Marl Baskerville was so unexpected, the proposition he had made was so far beyond even the sanguine hope which he had cherished upon entering the portals of his new profession, that it can be no matter for wonder that he is somewhat scared. The buoyant ambition of an ardent aspirant, however, very speedily dispels even the semblance of such a feeling, and so Langdale experiences a kind of bounding sensation. It seems as though it would be a relief to take a spring into the air, and he feels himself irresistibly drawing himself up to his full height. And then, again, he feels a momentary depression. For, wholly unbidden, the scene of the death of his fellow-usher at Nicholas Darvill's is vividly presented to his mind, and this draws audible words from his lips:—

"I little dreamt, good fellow," he soliloquizes aloud, "that your terrible last scene would be the opening of my career. And I am at once almost without a guide, save my own strong, hearty purpose and self-faith, to show myself before the world, and dare the ordeal of success or failure. Well,

I am ready for the ordeal. I am young, too young, perhaps, for such a responsibility; and yet why? Pitt was prime minister of England at three-and-twenty. Yes, yes! I have courage, I have faith, I have hope, and I have strength of purpose, as I think." And he seemed to knit himself together as he cried, in a joyous tone, "And may I not exclaim, as Gloster did,—

'Why, now my golden dream is out;
Ambition, like an early friend, throws back
My curtains, to tell me what I dreamt was true'?"

And Silvester Langdale paced up and down the room rapidly.

CHAPTER VII.

A BOUDOIR NEAR TO KENSINGTON GARDENS.

MARL BASKERVILLE proceeded from Silvester Langdale's chambers in Gray's Inn to his own residence, which was situated in Spring Gardens. It was an unpretending-looking house, but its situation was most convenient for Marl Baskerville's operations. It was on the confines of the aristocratic west and the plebeian east of the mighty metropolis. It was a point from which Marl Baskerville could radiate, as it were. The metropolis was as a spider's web, and he was its spider, in its solitary watchfulness; for he was alone in the world, and had been for twenty years past, during which time his character had become consolidated, as it were, into inflexibility. The interior aspect of his abode was in keeping with his course of life and with his character. It was gloomy and dim, and seemed to be relieved by no colours in its contents. Everything was dark and dismal, and his office was the most dismal room in the house. It was situated in the rear of the premises, and looked upon the blackened wall of the back part of the Admiralty. Dull, and dismal, and dingy as it looked, it yet contained that which was the representative of much wealth. There was a great iron safe in one corner, so thick and massive that you could feel its great weight as you looked at it. Its hinges were thick bolts of iron, and its key might, from its appearance, have dangled from the leathern jerkin of some grim gaoler in mediæval times, and have become him and his office well. And when the doors of that great safe were opened, they appeared to grind upon their hinges, and to evince a determination only to open slowly. And when they were shut to again they seemed to close crushingly, and with a resolve not to reopen. And such an adjunct to his office was very necessary for Marl Baskerville to possess, for the nature of the profession which he followed required that he should have bank notes at hand; and those notes were stored in that great safe, together with his boxes, in which were other notes, for which the engraved ones were exchanged.

Marl Baskerville was a money-lender as well as a lawyer, and he prac-

tised much more as the one than as the other. His name was as well known at Tattersall's as was that of the first favourite for the next Derby, but it was not used so freely. Men shouted out the name of the Derby favourite just about that bright time when the Derby may be said to be in everybody's mouth, but they only whispered Marl Baskerville's name. Perhaps they did not care even to do that, because at such a time it was more than dangerous for a member of the Rooms to be suspected of being short of money, and the mention of Marl Baskerville's name might create such a suspicion, and lead to the inference that the person mentioning it had been over-laying his "book."

In Marl Baskerville's safe were the autographs of those who were high and mighty in the land—autographs, however, which he had no desire to preserve; he rather looked hopefully to the time when he should get rid of them, and exchange them for others. Amongst his other callings, Marl Baskerville was what is known as a turf commissioner, that is, a person who invests those large sums of money upon the chances of a horse that we see quoted daily in the papers as a branch of the commercial transactions of the nation. It is an office that requires much shrewdness, great care, and no little *finesse*, as we shall probably see as we become better acquainted with Marl Baskerville and his professional pursuits.

Marl Baskerville proceeded, as we have said, from the chambers of Silvester Langdale to his own residence in Spring Gardens, but he did not remain there long. He went at once into his office, and found several letters lying on his desk. There was one, however, that seemed to attract his immediate attention. It was a small, three-cornered note, with a superscription in a lady's handwriting. He at once opened it, read its contents, smiled, and put the note in his pocket. He then opened the other letters, and, having read them, unlocked a drawer in his library table, and placed them therein, and then took up his hat and went out again. At the end of the street he hailed a cab, and directed the driver to convey him to Kensington.

The particular spot to which the cabman was directed to drive was in a street not far from the Gate. It did not contain many houses, but they were nearly all detached, and were enclosed in their own gardens. At the door of one of these the cab stopped, and Marl Baskerville was at once admitted to the lady of the house. He was shown into a spacious room that was fitted up with every appliance of luxury that the ingenuity of man, or the skill of accomplished artificers, could suggest. The room was a delightful specimen of light and elegant luxury. Its furniture—that furniture which the upholsterer and the cabinet-maker supply—was of the most costly description. The curtains to the windows were of embossed amber satin; the chairs and sofas were covered with a corresponding material and fashion; the carpet felt to the tread as soft and yielding and as springy as moss. Small tables were distributed about the room, covered with glittering elegances. The mantel-shelf bore an immense ormolu clock, with bronze figures a foot high, representing a flight of

angels. Depending from the centre of the room was a massive chandelier, with long crystal pendants, each glittering in the sunshine with its prismatic colours. One end of the room opened into an extensive conservatory, in which were arranged the choicest and brightest exotics, blooming brilliantly; and in the centre of the whole was an artificial cascade, which plashed down over pieces of rock, and amongst ferns and mosses.

The moment Marl Baskerville was announced, a lady who was reclining on one of the artistic sofas that adorned the room, and reading, sprang to her feet, and threw the book she was perusing impetuously from her, utterly regardless of its course, for it struck against one of the small tables that we have referred to, and shivered into atoms a beautiful ornament that stood beneath a glass shade. The accident, however, did not appear to give the lady the least concern, for she bounded towards Marl Baskerville, and exclaimed as she did so,—

“Well, you are a dear, good man, to come so quickly to my call.”

She was a tall, commanding, handsome girl, of about nineteen years of age. She had large, brilliant blue eyes, and her forehead was high and expansive. Her hair was a rich auburn, and waved in rolling ringlets down to her waist. She had a mouth that seemed to speak even when she was silent. The lips were almost imperceptibly apart, and this seemed to stamp a perpetual smile upon her countenance. Her cheeks were full, but they were not what is termed plump, and they exhibited that tinge of undefinable pink which blends with the edges of the tea-scented rose. Her countenance was full of animation, her eyes sparkled with joyousness, and her carriage would have been worthy of that Egyptian queen for whose love Mark Antony considered all the world well lost.

“You are a dear, good man, to come so quickly to my call,” she cried, as she took Marl Baskerville’s hat from his hand, and placed it on a small inlaid table. “Now sit down; I want to talk to you seriously.”

Marl Baskerville smiled expressively.

“Oh yes, I do,” she said, “more seriously than usual.”

“The same theme as usual?” Marl Baskerville inquired.

“Oh, of course; I want money, you know, if that is what you mean;” and the young lady laughed. It was a ringing, joyous, hearty laugh.

Marl Baskerville shrugged his shoulders.

“Now, for goodness’ sake, don’t perform those weirdish shrugs. They would do for the evil genius in a pantomime, but not for you, Baskerville, not for you.”

Marl Baskerville elevated his eyebrows, and said,—

“Some people perhaps think that I am an evil genius.”

“Well, let them think it; what do you care? I am sure you are not the man to care anything about what anybody thinks. In fact, you have as little to care about as I have;” and she laughed out merrily again.

Marl Baskerville cast a hurried glance round the room, and echoed her last

words to himself,—“As little to care about as she has!” What was the rapid current of his thought at that instant, as he repeated those words to himself?

“But how can you want money?” Marl Baskerville inquired of the beautiful girl who was standing near him.

“Oh, I know what that question implies,” she answered, quickly. “You fancy that the Prince left me with an inexhaustible store. So do people generally, I dare say. It was a substantial sum, undoubtedly, but it’s all gone.”

“All gone!” exclaimed Marl Baskerville, in unfeigned surprise.

“Well, all within a hundred or two, which is about the same thing, you know.”

“You cannot expect such another rich prize. They do not come every year,” Marl Baskerville remarked, rather obscurely. The young lady seemed very well to understand him.

“Perhaps not to the same extent; but although diamond-covered princes may not be picked up every day, there are fine fish to be caught always. My expectations have always been fulfilled, you know. Did I ever break an engagement with you? Come now, tell me that,” she cried, suddenly, and with energy.

Marl Baskerville admitted that she never had.

“Then why do you hesitate now?” she inquired, with a toss of her head.

“Why do you assume that I hesitate?”

“Oh, you can’t deceive me, you know. I can read a countenance readily enough. When you think that I want to borrow some money, see how the jaw slightly drops”—and with mock seriousness she elongated her own countenance,—“just like that. There is the ghost of a smile, but the smiler almost instantly gives up that ghost, as being unable to support it. Oh, I can read the thought that lurks behind that drop of the mouth that I refer to. But one word is as good as a thousand—I must have money by to-morrow afternoon.”

“Why is it so pressing?” inquired Marl Baskerville.

“The Duke of Breakdown’s stud is to be sold to-morrow afternoon, and I must have ‘Raglan,’ the pick of the lot.”

“Oh, that’s it, is it?” and Marl Baskerville smiled as before.

“He is the best horse across country in all England; I know it well, and come what may I will have him. They have put a reserve of eight hundred upon him, and so you must get me twelve hundred by to-morrow.”

“Twelve hundred pounds!” said Baskerville; “that is a large sum;” and he elevated his eyebrows.

“Now, in the name of plain sailing and straightforward business, don’t let us have any of that pantomime. You must do it.”

“Then it must be upon a good name.”

“You shall have it.”

"Whose?"

"Milltown's."

"Milltown's!"

"Ay, Milltown's;" and she laughed—it was a serious, a convincing laugh, so to speak—as she added, "Do you suppose I have forgotten how to play my game?"

Marl Baskerville said he knew she had not.

"Then say that I shall have the money to-morrow afternoon."

"You shall have it."

"There's my hand, Marl Baskerville. You are the friend I have always found you."

"And now tell me what is behind this impulse that I have observed?" Marl Baskerville inquired.

"Oh, you are a cunning man, Baskerville. You saw the impulse, did you? and you shrewdly guessed that there was something behind it, eh? Yes, and you are right. I am going to Goodwood."

Marl Baskerville did not seem much surprised at that intimation.

"Milltown is going, of course; and, Marl Baskerville," she cried, in an excited tone of voice, "there are others going that you and I know;" and she pointed her finger as she spoke, even as though she were pointing out the persons to whom she alluded.

"To whom do you refer?" inquired Baskerville.

"Why, the Montalbans will be there, and she will be there—yes, she is to be there!" and as the majestic beauty spoke her eyes flashed with passion, and her bosom heaved.

"Why, surely you are not jealous of Miss Montalban?" said Marl Baskerville, smiling.

The lady laughed scornfully, and then exclaimed,—

"Jealous? No, I am not jealous; I am only determined to bring her down."

"How do you mean?"

"She tried to bring me down. Her exalted virtue would have had me thrust from the field. Ha! ha! the strait-laced audacity!"

"I cannot altogether comprehend your allusion," said Marl Baskerville.

"Oh yes, you can," she cried, quietly.

"Believe me, I cannot."

"Do you mean to say that you have not heard of the scene in Leicestershire? Is it possible that you, who are acquainted with every man in the sporting world—you from whom, as it is said, no secrets in that strange world can be kept hidden—is it possible that you are unacquainted with that scene?"

Marl Baskerville had heard of it, but for the moment he had forgotten the incident, which had been talked of freely in the circles in which he moved, and connected with which he was so well known.

"Of course you knew of it," said the tall beauty, observing the change in the expression of Marl Baskerville's face. "Well, then, that is why I wish to go to Goodwood. She would have me expelled from the field, would she? I was to be warned away from every meeting, was I? My presence was not to be tolerated in the same field with Miss Montalban. I was to be driven off by the huntsman, ha! ha!" cried the tall beauty; but although she laughed, it was plain to see that a tempest was raging in her bosom, which swelled with passion as she paced the room while she was speaking.

"And what do you intend to do at Goodwood?" inquired Marl Baskerville.

"To look her down!" she cried, her countenance flushed with excitement. "Ay, to look her down; to walk by her side on the lawn; to hold my head up proudly by the side of her own; to gratify one of the strongest passions of my woman's heart!" and she struck her breast with her delicate hand, which was clenched with convulsive energy.

"Let me counsel you not to do it," said Marl Baskerville, calmly.

"Not do it!" she exclaimed: "Marl Baskerville, you do not know the passions of the female soul;" and she went up to his side, and grasping his wrist, she cried, in an undertone of excitement, "Suppose the father had stood by your side, and had wronged and humiliated you, what would you have done? what would have been your course?"

She little knew that she had touched one string that vibrated through Marl Baskerville's soul. It was but a wild and aimless sweep of the hand that had touched that chord, and yet she might, if she had been calmer, have observed that her question had gone to the very centre of his heart. It was a question that from that moment secured his devotion to herself and to her schemes. Upon how small a thread the destinies of people may sometimes hang! by what insignificant trifles may they be sometimes influenced!

"Marl Baskerville, you can sympathize with me; I can see that you can;" and as she said this her passion became less, and her excitement was evidently passing away. She smiled, and added playfully, "Now you will not fail me with the money?"

"You are sure of the name?" he said.

"Why ask the question? It is the name that you will take in exchange for the money. Marl Baskerville, we have had money transactions before."

"We have," he said.

"And I have never failed you?"

"Never."

"Nor will I in this;" and then she added abruptly, and again in an excited tone, "Why, do you know that she is thinking of him? but she has no more chance of him than she has of you. Now then, go, for I am engaged for a canter in the Park. To-morrow, then, without fail."

"To-morrow."

And Marl Baskerville left the splendid boudoir and the fascinating presence of Marie Wingrave, the most brilliant horsewoman in Rotten Row.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRIAL AT THE OLD BAILEY.

IN due course, and in due form, Marl Baskerville delivered the brief to Silvester Langdale, who received it from the messenger with his own hands. And never did lover receive his mistress with more rapture, never did speculative merchant witness the arrival of a rich and long-expected argosy with more joy, never did ardent enthusiast look upon what he believed to be the fruition of his hopes with more emotion, than did Silvester Langdale receive those folded sheets of paper which constituted his first brief, and which were to be his introduction to the great world into whose vortex he was about to enter. He carried the magic document tenderly, and as he laid it upon his office table he gazed upon it with something like awe, and seemed almost afraid to open it. Over and over again he read its inscription,—“The Queen *v.* Abel Barnes. Counsel for the prisoner, Mr. Silvester Langdale.” And as he did so he found himself catching his breath as he drew long respirations, and the veriest trifle would at that moment have caused him to shed tears, or to have laughed immoderately, for conflicting emotions were agitating his breast—conflicting, and yet so commingled that at one moment he almost trembled with doubt and fear, and almost at the same instant braced himself up, as it were, with that confidence and hope which are founded upon inherent mental power and determined purpose. In the solitude of that chamber in Gray’s Inn, shut out for the moment from all the world, there, in the midst of the solitude of the heart of London—for what solitude is more oppressing than that of him who is alone, without a friend, in this great metropolis?—perhaps that was the most trying moment of Silvester Langdale’s life. It was an ordeal that was indeed a trying one to bear, as he stood alone in that sombre chamber, almost dazzled by the mystic light which appeared to him to be the dawning of the golden sun of his good fortune. It was but natural that he should feel excited; it would have been strange indeed, and have indicated a callous heart, if at such a moment he had experienced no emotion.

It was some time before he could sit calmly down, and open the document which contained the reality of his new-born hopes, and when he at length did so, it was with a trembling hand and a beating heart; but as he read the instructions which his “brief” contained, the weakness—for such, of course, it was—passed away, and his whole soul became absorbed in the task, the responsibility that was now cast upon him, and

he rose from the perusal of the details of Abel Barnes's case fired with determination and strengthened in resolve. It was a case which was well calculated to excite the sympathies of a generous heart; it was a case in which the impulses of a kindly nature would be strongly roused, even in a stranger whose sympathies were rewarded with material acknowledgments. But Silvester Langdale was no stranger, as we have seen. Although in no way connected with the lamentable affair which had so strangely brought him fortune—a dismal cloud, out of which a bright sun shone for him,—yet he felt that he was closely connected with it, and the scene of Margale's death-bed was in his mind a portent of a dread picture in which he was at once actor and spectator. He felt in the seriously trying ordeal of his first appearance before the world, utterly unknown even by name, standing as he would be amidst strangers, and before a solemn tribunal, that his connection with the subject of the inquiry would nerve him in his efforts, and imbue him with that confidence which should justify what otherwise might appear a step to be characterized as temerity.

It was known that the trial of Abel Barnes, as it was a charge of murder, would not come on for three or four days after the commencement of the sessions; but Silvester Langdale was in attendance as soon as the court opened on the Monday morning, in order that he might accustom himself to the place in which he was soon so conspicuously to appear. When he entered the court the seats at the table appropriated to counsel were all occupied, and for a minute or two he had to stand in the gangway that leads down to the table. He was a stranger, a new man; perhaps he was thought by some in that court an interloper; and so, as he stood at the bottom of the gangway, all eyes were turned upon him, especially those around the barristers' table. He could see that whisperings were going on respecting him, and although he could not hear what was being said, he knew well enough what was the purport of the observations that were being indulged in. Immediately opposite was one young and impulsive member of the bar, who had attended the court for more than seven years, but who had never even "smelt a brief," as he himself would observe; although in personal appearance he was conspicuous enough, and therefore might have attracted the attention of some of the legal wolves who prowled about the purlieus of that court, for he had a big round face, fringed with large red whiskers. This interesting ornament of the bar of England, as soon as Silvester Langdale entered the court, brought his eye-glass to bear full upon him, and stared point-blank at him, as though he were some unusual phenomenon, just descended through the roof, or come up from the cells beneath. With an unmistakable action of the elbow he called the attention of his immediate neighbour, another member of the bar, of long standing but short practice—a gentleman with a face as sharp as a hatchet, but with wit about as dull as a grindstone; but there was no necessity to call his attention to Silvester Langdale's presence, because he was already indulging in a supercilious stare at the new comer.

Gradually the eyes of the whole bar were centred upon Silvester, and of course the bench followed the bar; the bench at the moment consisting of the recorder and two aldermen,—the one short and thick, and so plethoric about the neck and face that his tongue protruded from his mouth, and he breathed stertorously; and the other so tall and thin that when he stood up he looked like a wafer man, attired in a purple silk gown, fringed with fur.

Silvester Langdale stood the battery of these legal eyes right manfully, and although at the first, just for an instant, he felt a little nervous, he boldly confronted that united bar, and gazed around him with the utmost self-possession. Indeed, so unmistakable was his self-possession that the briefless one, with the large round countenance with red fringe, remarked to his neighbour that Silvester had “cheek enough for a young ‘un, and no mistake.”

Presently the members of the bar sat a little closer together, so that Silvester Langdale was enabled to take a seat at the table, and as he did so the gentleman next to whom he sat cast a sidelong glance at him, and scanned him out of the corners of his eyes. Emboldened by this proceeding, he turned his head quite round, and stared full into Silvester’s face, as though he desired to stamp a photograph thereof upon his own brain. Silvester Langdale could not refrain from smiling, and so he smiled, not exactly at the learned gentleman next to him, because he looked across the court; but the learned gentleman himself felt that the smile was intended for him, and so he patronized Silvester by turning his back full upon him.

The bar, however, very soon got reconciled to the presence of the new comer, or, at all events, they ceased to scrutinize him as a curiosity, and so he was left to himself, to look upon the scene around him. The *habitués* of that court had their separate functions marked upon their countenances as distinctly as though they had been printed there. It was not difficult for a sagacious observer to distinguish which were the jurymen, which the witnesses, which the several officers of the court individually, and the offices they filled; which the barristers’ clerks, and above all, which were the attorneys regularly practising in that court. These last were as distinctive as though they had been labelled. There were three of them present. One was an old man, with a countenance so seamed that it appeared to have been ploughed, and his skin was of the colour and of the texture of parchment. About his mouth there was a very remarkable expression. It seemed to have been drawn on one side, as with a string, and he spoke apparently without any motion of the lips; and he held down his head while in conversation, as though he were speaking with his ear rather than with his mouth. What a course of villany could that man record as the reminiscences of his professional career! Another member of the same fraternity then present was one much younger in years, and with an entirely different cast of countenance. Indeed, he was rather

good-looking. He had an open countenance, and was tall in stature. He had a very considerable practice amongst the most degraded clients of that august court. In fact, he and the man with the ploughed face divided nearly the whole of the practice therein. They took the cream—we were going to write, the scum—of that terrible social cauldron, Newgate.

Silvester Langdale had ample opportunity, during the three days that he visited the court, to become acquainted with its practice, for it was very simple. During that time, too, he had become thoroughly habituated to it, even as though he were an old practitioner therein; and after the first day he was no longer an object of curiosity to the scrutinizing bar, but was received by them as an installed member of the fraternity. Silvester Langdale felt quite at home and at his ease amongst them. He had ample opportunity of observing the amenities of the bench and the bar, before which and of which he was now a practising member. Indeed, on the second day this opportunity was something more than conspicuous,—in a case of petty larceny which was being tried, and in which a leading member of that bar was engaged for the prisoner. When the time for his address to the jury came, this legal functionary impressively and at once threw himself into the case which he had to make out for his client. As the evidence for the prosecution had been entirely conclusive, and admitted of no doubt whatever, he had recourse to the expedient of misquoting it. This course was allowed for some time by the presiding functionary, but at length he ventured to suggest that the learned counsel was entirely perverting the evidence which had been adduced. Upon which the learned counsel, thus checked, turned fiercely upon the presiding judge, and requested to be informed if he was sitting there for the purpose of instructing him (the learned counsel) in his business.

“I sit here to administer justice,” the judge remarked.

“But you don’t sit there to teach me how I ought to conduct a case,” cried the barrister, fiercely, and casting a meaning glance at the jury, as though he would say, “Have the goodness to observe how I will put him down.”

“One of my functions is to preserve order and regularity in this court,” observed the judge.

“And one of my functions is to defend the prisoner at the bar!” roared the learned counsel.

“But I cannot allow you to misquote the evidence that has been taken,” said the judge.

“The jury are the judges of that, my lord; I was addressing them;” and the learned counsel cast a kind of reverential glance towards the jury.

“Proceed,” said the judge.

And the learned counsel did proceed.

“Gentlemen of the jury,” he said, “the institution of trial by jury is one of the noblest—the noblest—of the institutions of our glorious con-

stitution, and the bar of England has been the great palladium of English liberty. You, gentlemen, are now the representatives of the sacred institution of trial by jury; and I, unworthy though I may be, unworthy as I know I am"—and he tapped his breast, as indicating that he nevertheless was a man of principle,—“represent the great palladium of British liberty. In former days of our history, gentlemen, when the liberties of the subject have been attacked by despotic power, the bar of England has stood between the persecuted and the oppressed.”

A rather intelligent jurymen here observed that he thought that in all those cases there were counsel on both sides.

“Sir, I admire your depth of reasoning,” said the learned counsel, bowing profoundly to the observant jurymen; “that is true enough, although it is not every one who has the sagacity to observe it, but in the times to which I refer, the counsel for the Crown, in the cases of oppression and tyranny, were miserable hirelings and place-holders—men who looked at nothing beyond the despotism of the ruling powers of the day, men who were, I may say, not to use too strong a figure of speech, outside the great palladium of British liberty. In those days, gentlemen, a judge upon the bench could overawe a jury and browbeat an advocate; but those days have passed away, no such judge can sit upon the bench in our time;” and, in the excitement of the moment, he pointed his finger full upon the judge who was presiding.

The learned judge—

“Did address
Himself to motion, like as he would speak,”

but he checked himself,—evidently, however, with an effort. The learned counsel observed this, and seemed to become more emboldened.

“Gentlemen of the jury,” he continued, “I may have a weak case, or a strong one; I may be counsel for the prisoner, or have to conduct the prosecution; but whatever be my position, however humble may be my efforts, as I know they are, no judge shall ever turn me aside from the straight path of my strict duty. Gentlemen, although we may no longer witness the terrible spectacle of a judge overawing a jury and browbeating an advocate, yet, as you have seen, we may have a legal president pre-judging a case, and attempting, metaphorically, to trip up a counsel in the discharge of his sacred duty in behalf of an unhappy prisoner.”

This was too much for the judge, and so he warmly said that he could not sit there and allow the court to be insulted by imputations which were as gross as they were uncalled for.

The learned counsel for the prisoner drew himself up, looked full across at the jury, and then threw at them a shrug, which said, as plainly as any language could do, “Now, gentlemen, what do you think of the difficulties of my position?”

The judge, addressing the jury, said,—

"Gentlemen, while I preside in this court I will not allow its decorum—that decorum without which justice cannot be properly administered—to be infringed, or the dignity of the bench to be violated."

"Does your lordship intend that observation for me?" inquired the learned counsel, sneeringly.

"Most unquestionably I do," the learned judge replied.

"Then I have to say this," cried the advocate, laughing scornfully, "that while I have the honour of practising in this court, I will do my duty to the prisoner and the gentlemen of the jury, in spite of the prejudices of any Methodistical old woman who may happen, by a strange freak of fate, to be placed in the responsible position of president of the court."

"If these observations are continued I shall feel it my duty to adjourn the court. I have to request that this unseemly altercation may be brought to a close," said the judge.

"Very well, then; have the goodness to allow me to conduct my case according to my own discretion, and don't attempt to prejudice the jury," cried the learned counsel, in a tone that he might have used towards a cabman with whom he had had a dispute respecting the amount of a fare.

The case was accordingly allowed to proceed, as the counsel for the prisoner had suggested; and taking advantage of the concession, he lashed himself into fury, threw his arms wildly about, and indulged in such energetic gesticulation that he cleared a vacant space on each side of him. He dashed his brief upon the table, upset the inkstand that was before him, and finally, in his peroration, jumped upon the seat behind, and from that elevation frothed out a stream of words, full of sound and fury indeed, but nothing more.

Then came the summing up of the learned judge, who, having read over the evidence to the jury, alluded to the scene which had taken place in the course of the trial. After referring to his long experience on the bench, the uniform courtesy with which he was treated by the bar generally, and the high estimation in which he was held by the world at large, he implored the jury to dismiss from their minds all recollection of what had but a few moments before occurred, even as though it had never happened, for it was highly essential that the pure stream of justice should not be polluted by even the semblance or shadow of personality. He therefore again appealed to them to dismiss entirely from their minds the recollection of the misunderstanding which had arisen between the learned counsel and himself.

Judges on the bench generally appear to have the notion that the mind of a jury is like a schoolboy's slate, from which impressions can be removed at will, and without the least exertion. If an atrocious crime has been committed, with the details of which all the newspapers of the land have been teeming for a fortnight before, a jury will be seriously requested to dismiss from their minds all that they may have happened to have read upon the subject. Sometimes, when the subject-matter of the

investigation has been the topic of conversation amongst all classes, and has been commented upon for days previously by the public press, the presiding functionary will suggest that possibly some of the jury may have heard comments out of doors on the case; thus leading to the inference that juries are not of the general public, and take no interest in its affairs. In all cases the jury are told to look upon their mind as a slate, and to treat it accordingly,—that is, rub all recent impressions out.

Such was the initiation which Silvester Langdale received into the mysteries and amenities of his new profession, upon his first appearance in court, and it must be confessed it was not calculated to give him a very elevated notion of the dignity of the tribunal before which he was to make his professional *début*. He, however, congratulated himself that the court before which the case in which he was to appear would be taken would be differently constituted from that in which the disorderly and most undignified scene he had just witnessed had taken place, as the judges would be altogether of a different stamp and standing.

The trial of Abel Barnes was fixed for the third day of the sessions, and as the case was one of murder, the galleries and places set apart for the free accommodation of the general public were besieged by eager applicants at the opening of the court, and the doorkeepers—or money-takers, perhaps we should more appropriately designate them—obtained proportionately high prices for the privilege of free admission to this interesting public court of justice. Viscount Montalban, in right of his position as a peer, was accommodated with a seat on the bench, between two aldermen, one a tallow-chandler, and the other a raw hide merchant; and the two civic functionaries—attired, of course, in their purple gowns, edged with fur—smirked and ogled at their friends in different parts of the court, indicative of the high gratification they felt at having a lord between them.

It had, of course, got noised about amongst the profession that the young unknown barrister, who had been observed to enter the court at the opening of the sessions, was to be entrusted with the defence of the prisoner, and the bar of the court had been struck with something like consternation when the intimation was conveyed to them. The men of standing in the court—that is, those who had the most practice—looked at one another, and smiled sarcastically; and one of them was heard to ejaculate, "Poor devil!" But whether the implied sympathy was intended for the prisoner or his advocate the world has never been informed. The briefless ones discussed the matter indignantly. What next? they reasoned. The profession was coming to something indeed! In former days long study and years of patience were sure to produce their just reward; but men of experience and observation were to be thrust aside by unknown whippersnappers and upstarts. Every gentleman had a different form of expression for his suggestive discontent, but they all agreed upon one point with wonderful unanimity,—of course the exhibition would be a preposterous and ludicrous failure; and with this comforting assurance they flocked into the

court to witness Silvester Langdale rush upon his own professional destruction.

When Silvester entered the court the eyes of the whole bar were turned upon him; but although he was a little flushed he did not appear at all nervous. A vacancy was immediately opened for him at the table, and he took his seat thereat, placing his brief before him. Immediately behind him sat Marl Baskerville, and as soon as the young barrister had settled in his place, the attorney money-lender and turf commissioner whispered to him,—

“How are your nerves?”

“As firm as steel,” Silvester Langdale replied, in a tone of voice that was confirmatory of his declaration.

“They will need to be.”

“They are.”

The next moment the clerk of arraigns rose, and, addressing the gaoler who was seated at one side of the dock, said,—

“Bring up Abel Barnes.”

And Abel Barnes was brought forward from behind, at the back of the dock, accordingly.

“I appear for the prosecution, my lord,” said a stout gentleman, who sat at a little distance from Silvester Langdale, at the same time rising and making an obeisance to the presiding judge.

“Is the prisoner defended?” the judge inquired.

“I appear for the prisoner, my lord,” said Silvester Langdale, rising and bowing also.

“Mr.—eh?” said the judge, with his pen in his hand, and looking with a smile towards, and over his spectacles at, the young barrister.

“Silvester Langdale, my lord.”

The learned judge wrote the name down, and several of the briefless ones looked at each other, and, in a subdued voice, said, “Silvester Langdale!” in a tone which implied that even the name was an impertinence.

The trial then proceeded, but the counsel for the prosecution had scarcely concluded his opening address when the judge said he had been looking over the depositions, and it appeared to him that the capital charge could not be maintained, and therefore the learned counsel had better confine themselves to the second count of the indictment, that of manslaughter.

The counsel for the prosecution said that such was the course which he intended to pursue, but his lordship would see that the prisoner had been committed—upon the coroner’s warrant for murder, and by the justices for manslaughter.

“They are clearing the way for you,” whispered Marl Baskerville to Silvester Langdale.

“I am sorry for it,” was the whispered reply.

“Your lordship will observe that there are two indictments,” said the

counsel for the prosecution; "and, if your lordship pleases, I will take the second one, which is for the minor charge of manslaughter, first."

"That will perhaps be the better course," said the judge.

And so the charge of manslaughter was taken. The evidence that was adduced was precisely the same as upon the inquest, and before the magistrates at Guildhall; but the wife of the unfortunate deceased, or rather, the woman who had passed as his wife, was not so violent or demonstrative in giving her testimony as she was at the investigation at Guildhall. Indeed, she was quite subdued on the trial.

Silvester Langdale did not attempt anything like a searching cross-examination of the witnesses, inasmuch as he was not instructed to dispute the facts; they were indeed indisputable. He questioned the woman with regard to the attempted use of a knife by the deceased, but nothing could induce her to admit that he had had a knife in his hand at all. The evidence of the policemen, however, was conclusive upon the point: when they picked the deceased up at the foot of the stairs he had a large and formidable knife clasped firmly in his hand.

The case for the prosecution having closed, the moment for Silvester Langdale's own trial came. The ordeal upon which his success or failure in his profession was based had now to be encountered, and the counsel for the prisoner rose to meet it. There was a sonorous cry of silence from the usher, the members of the bar settled themselves into attentive, scrutinizing, and critical listeners, and the learned judge looked down encouragingly upon the young barrister, as he rose to perform the duty which had been assigned to him.

Silvester Langdale was possessed of a magnificent voice, and he had acquired the faculty of modulating it without effort, and according to the due expression of emotion or passion required. There was a charm in the voice, and in its modulated tones, which gave more than ordinary force to the words of the speaker. We have said that he had acquired the power of modulating his voice according to the dictates of passion or emotion, but this is not strictly accurate. The faculty was a natural one; he had only developed it. Such a faculty cannot be wholly acquired. As the gift of poetry must be born with a man, so the man who is not born an actor can never become an actor by any studious process whatever. We know that it is a kind of canon of the stage, that no man can become an actor who has not gone through a certain course of probation, and study, and practice. The canon is a fallacious one. The truly great tragedian is as great an actor when he first places his foot upon the stage as when he has risen to the eminence of universal popularity. David Garrick, John Kemble, and Edmund Kean were great actors when they played their first part, and they needed no instruction, no study. Study will not create genius, although it may polish it where it is found to exist.

In addition to the advantage of a fine voice, Silvester Langdale exhibited graceful action, this again being natural, and not acquired. He could

emphasize a sentence with a wave of his hand, and he could exhibit energy even in the movement of his finger. It is but seldom that we find a noble voice and the power of expressive action combined in the same person; still less frequently do we discover, in addition to those two natural gifts, a third, which is greater than either—that of mental power, displayed in high oratory. These three great qualifications were possessed by Silvester Langdale, and the opportunity was now presented to him of exhibiting them to the world.

When he rose to address the jury he felt surprised himself at the perfect self-possession which he displayed. He did not even feel nervous in the position in which he stood, although the eyes of every one in that court were fixed upon him. Presently, so far from any feeling of nervousness agitating him, he felt strongly confident in his own powers, which seemed, indeed, to be newly opening even to himself. He felt, he deeply felt, the cause which he had to advocate, and so he threw his whole soul earnestly into it. In feeling and at the same time glowing terms, he depicted the death-bed scene at which he had, as if by a strange coincidence, assisted; he painted in terrible colours the encounter between the prisoner and the deceased; and he drew a touching picture of the anguish of mind of the prisoner,—anguish that was the more deeply imbibed by the afflictions which had so recently culminated in what was called his home, when he contemplated the fatal result which had ensued. He denounced with strong language that mockery of an investigation which could have resulted in a charge of wilful murder against the prisoner; and, while paying a just tribute to the laws of the country, he feared that those laws were too frequently perverted, and made the instruments of wrong, through the agency of incompetence and ignorance. He fervidly declared his conviction that the prisoner could have been actuated by no malicious motive; nay, he believed that it was a noble impulse which had led to the catastrophe which had made the prisoner amenable to the laws of his country, an impulse born of reverence for the sacred dead. The deceased would have rushed into that terrible presence, and have desecrated the chamber of death, and the prisoner stood between him and the sacrilege, for such it was, seeing that the dead are sacred; he would have ruthlessly violated that sanctity, and have offered ribald indignity to the emaciated corpse of him who was the stark tenant of that denuded chamber; this in his drunken fury he was endeavouring to do when the stalwart arm of the prisoner arrested his course, and thrust him back from the dismal chamber of death. This it was that had aroused the mind of the deceased to the passion of a wild savage, and it was under the influence of this passion that he had drawn the coward's weapon, the assassin's knife, and had rushed upon the prisoner, who in his own defence had struck the miscreant down, unhappily to rise no more. Why, there was a manliness in the deed which claimed our admiration; it was the prompting of that spirit which animated heroes, and led them on to glory. It was but the fitting

punishment of a dastard, the rough retribution which true courage would suggest. And was this to be branded as a crime? In the name of justice and of right, in the name of the best instincts of our nature, he protested against such a thought, and in the name of a great beneficence he called upon the jury to declare before the world that the unhappy man at the bar was guilty of no crime, and had committed no wrong.

When Silvester Langdale sat down there was a manifestation of applause, at which the usher indignantly cried out "Silence!" and the learned judge looked over his spectacles full into the face of the gaoler, who stood by the side of the prisoner, as though the applause had proceeded from him, and said,—

"If that indecent exhibition is repeated, I will commit the parties."

Judges always say this in such cases, and yet they must know that it is an empty threat, and cannot be carried out unless the whole of the British public then assembled in the court are committed *en masse*. And the threat invariably produces a ludicrous effect,—because, of the people who have applauded, some receive the rebuke with solemn, supernaturally solemn, countenances; others receive it with a leer and a jest; and the jury invariably look upon it with stolid indifference. By-the-by, suppose the jury in such a case were to manifest their approbation by open applause, what form would the rebuke of the judge then take?

The address of Silvester Langdale had undoubtedly created a profound impression, and many whispered comments upon it ran round the circle of the barristers' table.

The judge inquired if the learned counsel had any witnesses to call, and Marl Baskerville hurriedly conveyed some intimation to the young barrister, who immediately said,—

"Yes, my lord, I have an important witness to call, who will speak to the peaceable disposition of the prisoner generally."

"I think the prisoner has been described as a pugilist, has he not?" inquired the judge, looking over his spectacles, with a meaning smile upon his countenance.

"That is his calling, my lord, and it is on that account that I desire to call the witness to his character," observed Silvester Langdale.

"As you please," acquiesced the judge.

"Viscount Montalban," said Silvester Langdale, turning to where the noble lord was seated between the two aldermen.

Lord Montalban started to his feet as though he had been struck, and exclaimed,—

"Me?"

"I am instructed to call your lordship, as I am informed that you have seen something of the prisoner," said Silvester Langdale.

"Oh, very good. I'll tell you what I know about him with pleasure," said Lord Montalban, recovering from the momentary surprise into which he had been thrown, while the prisoner looked eagerly at his noble patron.

as though in doubt whether he would say good or evil of him. The doubt, however, was soon resolved, for the noble witness, in answer to the questions that were put to him, after the usual formula, said he had known the prisoner for some years, and, notwithstanding his calling, had known him to be a peaceable, well-disposed man.

"Never harmed a fly, my lord, knowingly," said the prisoner, speaking for the first time since he had pleaded, and casting a kind of imploring look at the judge.

At the close of Lord Montalban's evidence the jury whispered to one another, and nodded their heads impressively; and it was plain enough to observe that the speech for the defence and the evidence to character had left a strong impression on their minds.

The learned judge succinctly summed up the evidence, and merely left one question for the jury to decide, Had the prisoner struck the deceased maliciously, or had he done so in self-defence against what could only be termed the atrocious, un-English, brutal, and dastardly use, or attempted use of the knife by the deceased?—a habit, the judge said, which was unhappily prevalent amongst a certain class, and which, when it came under his judicial notice in the shape of a charge against a prisoner, he invariably visited with the utmost rigour that the law would allow. The question, then, that the jury had to determine was, whether the blow by which the deceased had met his death was given to resist a dastardly attack with a knife, or was it maliciously given in an ordinary brawl?

The jury immediately returned a verdict of Not Guilty, with an addendum to mark their strong reprobation and horror of a resort to the knife in personal encounters.

The verdict, notwithstanding the previous admonition of the judge, was received with applause, especially in the galleries; and the prisoner was ordered to be forthwith discharged. And as he left the bar he bowed profoundly, and evidently gratefully, to the judge, and then more profoundly still to his young advocate.

When Silvester Langdale retired to the robing-room, at the back of the court, he was met in the corridor by Lord Montalban, who advanced to him, and with a smile said,—

"Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Langdale, upon the great success of your *début* in public. Your address was very masterly and convincing."

"Your lordship is pleased to say so."

"But may I ask you, Mr. Langdale, how it was that you came to call me as a witness?" and his lordship still smiled approvingly as he put the question.

"Simply because I was instructed, my lord," said Silvester; "I had not at the time the honour of even knowing your lordship's person."

"Marl Baskerville instructed you, did he?"

"He was the attorney from whom I received my brief, my lord."

"Here he comes," said Lord Montalban, looking down the corridor; and the next instant Marl Baskerville joined them.

"Your lordship will, I am sure," he said, "see the motive I had in calling you as a witness, and forgive it. It suddenly struck me that your lordship's evidence, following immediately upon the brilliant oration of our young friend here, would be conclusive with the jury."

"It was the eloquence of our young friend, Baskerville, that did it," said his lordship; and then, turning to Silvester Langdale, he added, "Sir, I am extremely glad I have had the opportunity of making your acquaintance. If your engagements will permit, will you do me the honour of dining with me to-morrow evening, at seven, in Park Lane?"

Lord Montalban was not half so much astounded at being called as a witness as Silvester Langdale was when he received this invitation, and he felt hot all over his head and face as he did himself the distinguished honour of accepting his lordship's invitation.

THE THREE STRANGERS.

THREE strangers once came to my heart, and knock'd.
 "What is thy name?" I to the first did say.
 "My name is Faith," a thrilling voice replied.
 "I know thee not," I proudly said; "go hence."—
 The second came. "And what *thy* name?" I ask'd.
 A soft, clear voice did sing, "My name is Hope."
 I sigh'd and frown'd. "Too late, too late," I cried;
 "I lost thee long ago; mine ear is deaf
 To thy sweet carol."—Straight there came a third,
 Who also knock'd. "Thy name?" I roughly said.
 "Ah! it is Love; wilt thou not let me in?"
 She enter'd whilst I linger'd, blessed guest!
 Cold was my heart, and bare; unfurnish'd all
 Of that which could so fair an inmate woo
 To take up her abode. Yet so it was.
 She turn'd my pride to sweet humility,
 And o'er my future threw such radiant hues,
 That I dissolved in prayer and happy praise;
 When, looking up again with tearful eyes,
 I saw the strangers, whom I so dismiss'd,
 Embracing Love. "And how is this?" I said,
 And blush'd to think how I my heart had barr'd
 Against their entrance. Love, with beauteous smile,
 Made answer, "We are one, though seeming three,
 And we in turn make trial of man's heart,
 And who first entrance finds brings in the rest.
 We cannot live apart upon this earth,
 Though I alone dwell near the throne of God."
 And since that hour I cherish all the three.
 Faith is my altar; Hope doth fan the flame;
 And Love brings hourly some rich sacrifice,
 That incense thence to God may ever mount.
 Be not forgetful, then, to entertain
 Those who may strangers seem; because thereby
 Some men have angels lodg'd unawares.

CAROLINE KING.

ENGLISHMEN IN JAPAN.

THE "Far East" is just now attracting the earnest attention of the politician. Already a change has commenced in the vast, unwieldy empire of China, which may possibly lead to the reorganization of society over a third portion of the globe. Japan, too, the most conservative of countries, has experienced a shock which threatens the stability of the Government, by bringing that strange people into contact with European enterprise and civilization. Hitherto, it must be confessed, our intercourse with the Japanese has only served to involve us in difficulties and peril. There have been the outward signs of friendship between the two Governments; but our countrymen have been daily liable to insult or murder, and, while trading as merchants, have found it necessary to be as watchful and well prepared for attack as soldiers in a beleaguered city.

At the present moment, indeed, the position of foreigners is, if possible, more insecure than it has been since their admission into the country. Although not at war with the Government of the Tycoon, we have attacked the territory of a great feudal prince, whose revenue is estimated at nearly £500,000 sterling, whose followers are prepared to do his bidding in any part of the empire, and who is not likely to endure the destruction of Kagosima without some attempt to revenge himself on his assailants.

If any traveller laments that, since the discovery of the North-West Passage, and of the source of the Nile, no enterprise remains bold enough for his courage and hardihood, we recommend him to procure an outfit from Allen, or Silver, and to start in one of the steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company for China and Japan. It would be easy for him, on arriving at Shanghai, to test his mettle by taking service under the Emperor of China, and assisting the pig-tailed celestials in the bombardment of Nanking; but we will suppose that, after a few days' sojourn, he bids farewell to the "Calcutta of the far East," and seeks a new experience of life in the empire of Japan. He will start then for Nagasaki, a voyage of about 400 miles, and the nearest point of Japan to the continent of China. As the steamer approaches the Bay of Nagasaki, a scene of exquisite beauty will attract the spectator. Islands covered with foliage or wild cereals are passed in rapid succession, and at length the town itself is seen lying in peaceful beauty at the foot of the hills. But if our voyager turn his eyes to the right, he will behold a spot which is neither beautiful in itself, nor pleasant from its associations. Who has not heard of Decima, the commercial settlement,—say, rather, the wretched prison-house of Dutch merchants for many generations? Honest Thunberg, the Swedish doctor, relates to us in no feeble terms the indignities to which every Hollander was subject who ventured to exile himself in that miserable factory. Happily, the cringing servility of the Dutch in Japan has no counterpart

in the history of Englishmen in that empire; and indeed it may be questioned whether, in any other part of the world, European merchants have submitted to such degradation for the sake of gain. On first landing, however, in a country so strange as Japan, everything with the traveller is likely to be *couleur de rose*, and so he will not think much about Decima, but will rather gaze wistfully at the city from which he hopes to gain his first notion of Japanese civilization. His curiosity will be gratified to the uttermost, and for a while his pleasure may remain unalloyed. A healthy and exhilarating climate; glorious scenery; a lively, intelligent, and humorous people; picturesque dresses among the higher classes, and the almost entire absence of dress amongst the lower; carefully cultivated gardens; wide and macadamized streets equal to the finest in Europe, with low houses, which, to an English eye, seem little better than hovels; and spacious temples covering the hill-side; the bathing-rooms; the begging, bare-shaven priests; and the tea-houses, in which fair damsels whose teeth are as yet uninjured by matrimonial blacking offer the favourite beverage on bended knee;—all present a scene so novel to the European, that he will not willingly remember the sombre narratives of travellers, and the official statements contained in Blue-books, but will be even tempted to look with a kindly or indifferent eye on many things which, in calmer mood, he would heartily condemn. Certes, the superficial impression left on the traveller's mind with regard to Nagasaki will be a pleasant one; and if in the train of a European diplomatist—the only way in which such an excursion could be taken—he were fortunate enough to make the nine days' journey overland from Nagasaki to the capital, he might gain a still more favourable notion of Japan and the Japanese. What a bright sunny climate! what delicious glimpses of hills, and woods, and golden corn-fields, of sea cliffs and sea havens! what neat and carefully tended gardens, with cottages surrounded, as in dear old England, by roses, hollyhocks, and honeysuckles, and gladdened by the merry shouts of happy children! And see! even the hedgerows and fields remind the Englishman of his native land; for yonder are the dog-rose and eglantine, the thistle, the harebell, and the buttercup. To be sure, there are groves of bamboos, and plantations of cotton, and fields of rice, and enough of semi-tropical vegetation to remind one of the vast space which separates Japan from England; but yet it is possible sometimes, if no Japanese figures obstruct the foreground, to lose sight of the foreign features of the picture, and to see only the homely, rural charms which are so dear to the heart of the English traveller.

Having started our countryman on a journey as full of peril as of interest, we shall give our readers the truest notion of the risk he is likely to encounter, by selecting a few incidents from the story of Englishmen in Japan during their five years' residence in the empire. There are ample materials for the narrative. Since 1858 we have had a prolific growth of Anglo-Japanese literature. Books of travel abound, and while some of

these are of the flimsiest and feeblest character, the greater number are the works of men gifted with no common observation. Mr. Fortune, Mr. Oliphant, and the Bishop of Victoria, although their knowledge of Japanese life and character has been limited, give us much trustworthy information; while Sir Rutherford Alcock, in his invaluable work, "*The Capital of the Tycoon*," has told the tale of Japanese treachery and English diplomacy with a minuteness which borders on prolixity. But Sir Rutherford Alcock, having resided for three years at Yedo as her Majesty's Consul-General, writes with authority on all matters connected with Englishmen in Japan, as well as on the manners and customs of the country. We can therefore readily excuse the verboseness and egotism of his narrative for the sake of the varied information it affords. And then, finally, for those who are anxious to understand the relations of this country with Japan, there are the Blue-books, which, despite their official shape, may safely be recommended to the general reader. They are as full of exciting incidents as a sensation novel.

Centuries ago the Japanese evinced no repugnance to intercourse with foreign nations. At the commencement of the seventeenth century the East India Company sent vessels to the country, and so also did the Portuguese, the Spaniards, and the Dutch; and before that period the zeal and energy of Francis Xavier had been instrumental in opening up a wide field for missionary enterprise. An embassy of Japanese nobles was even despatched to the Pope, and Japan, "to all human appearance, seemed on the verge of becoming a professedly Christian nation, and of being enrolled among the adherents of the Papacy." But the attempt of the Jesuits to exercise political power in the islands led at last to their overthrow, and to the resolution of the Japanese Government—to which, for two centuries and a half, it successfully adhered—of shutting out the country from intercourse with foreign lands. This exclusive policy, however, was not strong enough to resist the progressive—or, as it may, perhaps, more fitly be termed, the aggressive—spirit of the present age. In 1854, Commodore Perry, of the United States navy, compelled the Japanese to make a treaty for the good treatment of shipwrecked sailors, and to open two or three ports for whalers. Then followed the Russian mission under Admiral Putiatin; after which the Dutch obtained, by the help of their commissioner, a relief from the degrading terms on which they alone, to the exclusion of all other European powers, had been permitted to trade with Japan. These were but slight successes; but they served to shake the exclusive policy of the Japanese, and to open up the way for further advances. In 1858, Mr. Harris, a diplomatic agent of the United States, having obtained a letter from the President, succeeded, after much manœuvring, in gaining permission to present it personally to the Emperor at Yedo. At that time, it will be remembered, England and France had large forces on the coasts of China. The American representative took a subtle advantage of this circumstance, and suggested to the Japanese Government that it would be

better, at such a crisis, to enter freely into a treaty with America, rather than be forced into a treaty with the allies. This *ruse* on the part of Mr. Harris proved successful, and a treaty of commerce was signed between America and Japan. Such a change in the policy of the country was not, however, effected without opposition. The earlier treaty of Commodore Perry had been immediately followed by the death of the reigning Tycoon. This second treaty produced a similar result; and when, in the following month, her Majesty's representative arrived, and the Treaty of Yedo was signed, Mr. Oliphant relates how the Tycoon sent Lord Elgin "a great many civil speeches, expressed in the warmest terms his regret at never having been able to receive him, and wished him a brilliant career, and future success and prosperity." But at the time when this polite message was purported to be sent from the Tycoon, that royal personage was no longer in existence.

This deception at the outset did not promise well for the future. The Japanese had been alarmed into a treaty against their will, and they now resolved to do everything in their power to render that and all similar treaties worthless. It is this resolution which has produced all the evasions and subterfuges, all the obstructions and annoyances, recorded in our Blue-books, as well as the terrible acts of treachery and bloodshed which have followed rapidly one upon another during the five years of European intercourse with Japan. No sooner did Sir Rutherford Alcock arrive at the capital than his troubles commenced. The loveliest spot had been assigned to the British representative. "A lawn was immediately in front, beyond a little lake, across which was a rustic bridge; and beyond this again plum trees and azaleas, while the background was filled up with a noble screen of timber, composed of the finest of all Japanese trees, the evergreen oak and maple. Palms and bamboos were interspersed, and a drooping plum tree was trained over one end of the rustic bridge giving passage across the lake. To the right a steep bank shut in the view, covered equally with a great variety of flowering shrubs and the ground bamboo, and crowned with more of the same timber. Through this a pass led upwards by a zigzag flight of steps to a fine avenue of trees, the end of which widened into a platform, whence a wide view of the bay and part of the city below could be obtained with a perfectly scenic effect. The distant view was set in a framework of foliage, formed by the branches and trunks of pine trees, towering from fifty to a hundred feet high into the blue sky above. If Japan could only be viewed as a place of exile, it must be confessed a more beautiful hermitage could not have been chosen." Hereafter a tragic interest was destined to be attached to this "Eden Minor." Her Majesty's minister discovered to his cost that the residence which had been allotted him was perfectly indefensible. And the city, too, in which he had come to occupy so novel a post, may claim for picturesque beauty to be one of the loveliest in the world. "The climate," says Sir Rutherford Alcock, "is superior to that of any other country east of the

Cape. The capital itself, though spreading over a circuit of some twenty miles, with probably a couple of million of inhabitants, can boast what no capital in Europe can,—the most charming rides, beginning even in its centre, and extending in every direction over wooded hills, through smiling valleys and shady lanes fringed with evergreens and magnificent timber. Even in the city, especially along the ramparts of the official quarter, and in many roads and avenues leading thence to the country, broad green slopes and temple gardens, or well-timbered parks, gladden the eye as it is nowhere else gladdened within the circle of a city." Yedo is not at present open to European merchants. The different legations are alone permitted the privilege—if indeed it be one—of residing at the capital of the Tycoon.

About sixteen miles below Yedo lie the bay and town of Kanagawa. According to the Treaty, this port was to be thrown open to foreign trade; but the consul-general found to his surprise that Yokuhama, a town lying four miles off on the opposite side of the bay, had been chosen by the Japanese Government for the location of foreigners. On his arrival he discovered that granite piers and landing-places had been built, and a number of houses and "go-downs," or warehouses, prepared for foreign merchants, together with a custom-house and a large range of official quarters. Yokuhama is away from the Tocaïdo, or principal road of the kingdom, and from its peculiar position the merchants could have their trade watched and controlled, and in case of disturbance might be cut off from the main land. The British consul saw the danger of permitting the successful termination of this plot, and took counsel with the American minister. Both resolved to resist this evasion of the treaties; but the difficulty was aggravated by the merchants themselves, who, being eager to enter upon business, were but too ready to take possession of the houses which the Japanese had prepared for them. The utmost the ministers could effect was to secure an extension of the site, to be placed at the disposal of the representatives of the five treaty powers. Other diplomatic troubles followed. The currency question is one which in most countries severely taxes the energy of the statesman. In Japan it caused infinite perplexity, and not a little fraud, on the establishment of foreign relations, and it was evident that the Chancellor of the Japanese Exchequer had for his ultimate aim the closing of the markets to all foreign dealers.

It would take far more space than we have at our disposal, to recount the manifold obstructions placed in the way of foreigners by the crafty designs of Japanese statesmen, and the pertinacious obstinacy of Japanese officials. Mendacity is not considered dishonourable in Japan,—indeed, it may almost be said that he is deemed the ablest statesman who is the most apt in lying for his country's good; and the patriotism of the Japanese is never displayed with greater heartiness than in deceiving the merchant invaders of their soil. No doubt a Japanese Conservative has a good deal to say in favour of the ancient *régime*. He cannot understand the value

of foreign products to a country which amply supplies all the wants of its inhabitants. He is shrewd enough to see that the stronger race is fated to win ascendancy in every land where it may gain a footing. He looks to the wars which have desolated China, and discerns in them the result of foreign interference; and if he be one of the great Daimios of the land, a feudal prince owning large territories, and served by a multitude of retainers, he dreads the diminution of his power from the progress of commerce, and the gradual enlightenment of the nation. The Japanese are undoubtedly a very worldly-wise people, and perhaps as well off as any people can be whose civilization is entirely material; but the corruption which threatens ultimately to destroy their national vitality is only staved off by the stern severity of their laws; and any change from without is liable to destroy the machinery of the Government. Within five years Japan has made treaties with five European powers; but while signing these treaties with the one hand, she has endeavoured with the other to render them entirely valueless. When intrigue and diplomacy have failed to accomplish this result, the sharp blade of the assassin has been called into requisition. Human life is not much valued by the Japanese. Their code of laws is perhaps the bloodiest in the world; and the honour of the upper classes induces them frequently to further the ends of justice by performing the Hara-Kiru, or, as our countrymen have facetiously termed it, the "Happy Despatch," and ripping themselves up in the presence of their friends. Statesmen, in the event of a ministerial crisis, will sometimes terminate in the same manner their period of office; and it is even stated, though hardly on good authority, that the Mikado, or spiritual Emperor, can command the Tycoon to go through the same ceremony. We need not wonder, then, that the lives of foreigners are but little regarded, and that nothing but the fear of ultimate consequences can preserve them from destruction. Every merchant in Japan is aware that a sword is hanging over him, and his anxiety is scarcely relieved by knowing that, in case of his assassination, a heavy money compensation will be demanded.

The relations of foreigners with Japan, since 1858, have indeed been marked by many bloody tokens. Three Russians, one of whom was an officer, were the first victims. Then followed the murder of a servant of the French consul at Yokuhama. In January, 1860, Mr. Eusden, Sir Rutherford Alcock's Japanese secretary, was barbarously murdered at the gate of the British Legation; in February, two Dutch captains were slain in Yokuhama—"they had been set upon in the dark, and head and limbs had nearly been severed from their bodies, as though butchers had assailed them with their cleavers;"—one month later, the Gotairo, or Regent of the empire, was assassinated in broad daylight, not a hundred yards from his own gates, and it was thought that the Foreign Legations would be the next objects of attack. For some time, however, despite the fears expressed and the precautions taken by the Japanese Minister of Foreign

Affairs, our Consul-General tells us that the monotony of the life at Yedo was disturbed only by an occasional earthquake or fire. Japan is the land of earthquakes, and fires are, if possible, still more frequent, so that, despite the danger, people come to regard both these evils with comparative indifference. But the fear of assassination is not so easily overcome; and it was not very long before the members of the British Legation were again roused to the peril of their position. One day, just as they were sitting down to dinner, a French abbé entered, bringing with him in a norimon the French ambassador's Italian servant, who had been attacked and severely wounded while standing at the gate of the French Legation. Fortunately, he had received only a flesh wound, but his clothes were saturated with blood, and he presented a frightful spectacle. The assailant was an officer of Prince Satsuma, one of the most powerful Daimios of the empire, and with whose name we are now but too familiar.

The year 1860 closed peacefully; but on the first day of the new year a report was spread by the Gorogio, or Council of State, that a number of the retainers of Prince Mito (a chief who, like Satsuma, is conspicuous for his enmity to foreigners) had combined, "with the intention of setting fire to the foreign settlement at Yokuhama; and at the same time of attacking each of the Foreign Legations in the capital, and murdering their inmates." This proved to be nothing but a rumour, devised, in all probability, for the purpose of intimidating the official staff at Yedo; but not long after Mr. Heuskin, the American secretary, was murdered; and a few months later, the attack on the British Legation, which had so often been anticipated, actually took place. The Consul-General, having just returned from a journey of some duration through the interior of Japan, had retired early to rest. Suddenly he was aroused by one of the student interpreters, who said that the Legation was attacked. He sprang up, half incredulous, but the appearance of Mr. Laurence Oliphant, with a great gash in his arm and a wound in his neck, and of Mr. Consul Morrison, with blood flowing from a sword-cut in his forehead, showed that this time the report was not groundless. The rest of the story shall be told in Sir Rutherford Alcock's own words. They will convey a vivid idea of the dangers incurred by Englishmen in Japan:—

"I of course looked for the rush of their assailants pursuing; and I stood for a second ready to fire, and check their advance, while the wounded passed on to my bedroom behind. I was the only one armed at this moment; for although Mr. Morrison had still three barrels, he was blinded and stunned with his wound. To my astonishment no pursuers followed. One of the party now grouped round me broke open my other pistol-case, and armed himself, but two others had no sort of weapon. Mr. Oliphant had encountered his assailants in the passage leading from his room with only a heavy hunting-whip, snatched from his table on the first alarm. We had, in fact, been taken by surprise—the guards first, and ourselves later; and no sign of any one coming to our rescue appeared.

of all the hundred and fifty surrounding the house. Mr. Oliphant was bleeding so profusely, that I had to lay down my pistol and bind up the wound in his arm with my handkerchief; and while so engaged, there was a sudden crash and the noise of a succession of blows in the adjoining apartment. Some of the band were evidently breaking through the glazed doors opening into the court with a frightful *fracas*; still no yaconins or guards seemed attracted by the noise! A double-barrelled rifle had by this time been loaded; but still there we were—five Europeans only, including a servant—imperfectly armed, and with two more disabled, exposed to the fury of a band of assassins, of whose number we could form no guess, neither could we tell from what quarter they might come upon us. Whether many or few, they were left in entire possession of the house for full ten minutes. While they were engaged breaking their way into the room or out of it—for this we could not tell, and we were uncertain at what moment they might either come pouring through the suite of rooms in which we stood, by the open passage adjoining the very room they were in, or through some windows close to the ground, within a yard of the point they were breaking down—I had a moment's hesitation, whether from the window immediately facing we should not fire a volley into them at point-blank range. But we were so few, and they might be numerous enough to rush in and overpower any resistance. On the other hand, *they* evidently had missed their way to my apartments; and every minute lost to them was a priceless gain to us, since it could not be that the guard to whom our lives were entrusted would abandon us altogether, unless there was treachery. The unwillingness to leave Mr. Oliphant lying helpless on the floor, even for a short space, in the terrible uncertainty as to what point an attack might come from, turned the balance, and determined me to stand and wait the issue. The noise subsided. Here was reason to hope rescue had come, or, at least, a diversion from without, and that the assailants had turned in some other direction, or perhaps made their retreat. Then only I ventured with two of the party to leave the wounded, and go to look for one of our number, at a farther wing of the building, who had never appeared, and might have been less fortunate. While advancing, I put one of the students, Mr. Lowder, as a sentry, at an angle commanding a long passage leading from the entrance and the approach from two other directions, and had scarcely advanced ten steps when a shot from his pistol suddenly recalled me. A group of armed men had appeared at the further end, and not answering his challenge, he had very properly fired into them; and as it was down a passage he could scarcely have missed his aim,—at all events they suddenly retreated. And this was the last we saw of our assailants. A minute or two later, the civilian officers in charge of the place appeared with congratulations on our safety—how little due to them I could not but remark. Mr. Macdonald, the missing one of my party, came in with them, to my great relief. His apartment being partially detached on the other side of

the grounds, it appears he had rushed out on hearing, as he thought, some one break into his bedroom in the rear; and after in vain attempting to induce a guard immediately above him to come down, made his way through a side gate to the front, where he found a wild scene of tumult and conflict. In the courtyard of the temple itself, and in front of that leading into the part assigned to the legation, there were groups fighting—men with lanterns rushing to and fro, and gathering from all sides. It was easy to understand that many minutes elapsed before he could obtain any attention to his demand, that some of the guard should go into the house to our rescue; nor was it, in effect, until all the assailants outside had been beaten off, or had made good their retreat, that there was any thought of the minister and those with him inside, or of the necessity of seeing that those for whom they were fighting outside were not in the mean while being cut in pieces and deliberately assassinated within. The whole guard had evidently been surprised; every one had been asleep, and turned into their guard-houses, and not a single one of the hundred and fifty could have been on the alert."

Such is the strange narrative of a British minister's perils in the capital of the Tycoon. Everything in Japan is said to have its *double*; and as if to prove the truth of the statement, this attack on the legation was renewed in the following year. Sir Rutherford Alcock had returned to England to rest awhile from his onerous labours, and his dangerous and difficult post was occupied (as it still is) by Colonel Neale.* One night, shortly after twelve o'clock, the Colonel tells us that he heard a loud challenge from the British sentry at his door, that this was followed by a rapid succession of blows or cuts, and that on leaving his bed and running to the spot, he found the wounded sentry dying on the floor. The members of the legation were by this time aroused, and remained on the defensive, not knowing the number of their assailants. In a few minutes it was discovered that a corporal of the name of Crimp was missing; and after a while the dead body of the poor man, covered with wounds, was found lying in a pool of blood at the door of one of the bedrooms. "No person," says Colonel Neale, "had been arrested by the Japanese guards; the assassin or assassins had passed through their lines." This second attack on the legation happened in the summer of 1862, at the very time when the Japanese ambassadors were enjoying our hospitality in London.

Three months later, three gentlemen and a lady were riding on the high road which connects Kanagawa with the capital. After proceeding seven miles they were met by a body of Prince Satsuma's followers. The men, indignant, no doubt, at seeing foreigners on horseback—a privilege

* Since writing the above, we learn that Sir Rutherford Alcock has been requested to resume his official post in Japan, and that he is now on his way to that country.

which among the Japanese is only permitted to the nobility—made signs to them to turn back; and they were on the point of doing so, when, without any further notice, some of these swashbucklers drew their swords and assaulted them with the most savage fury. The lady, Mrs. Borrodaile, had her head slightly cut with a sword-stroke. Happily, however, she escaped without further injury, and rode swiftly back to Yokuhama, to give the alarm. Captain Vyse, her Majesty's consul at that port, in company with the French minister and a number of armed men, hastened to the spot. On arriving they were horrified at finding Mr. Richardson, one of the gentlemen, lying upon the road with his head severed from his body, and his two companions, Mr. Marshall and Mr. Clarke, severely wounded. It is difficult to describe the excitement of the foreign community at Yokuhama on the discovery of this atrocious crime. The murder was permitted, if not actually prompted, by Shimadzoo, the father of Prince Satsuma. The murderers were known to be in the immediate neighbourhood of Kanagawa; and it was proposed to attack them at once, and punish them while their hands were yet stained with the blood of their victim. There was much to be said in favour of such a course in a country like Japan; and it was, we believe, strongly urged by Captain Vyse and by the French consul; but Colonel Neale, her Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires*, fettered, doubtless, by the restrictions of his position, viewed the matter in an official light, and resolved to await instructions from home.

A great power like England is bound to exercise much forbearance when brought into collision with a semi-barbarous nation. At the same time it is necessary to show that this forbearance does not arise from weakness, and that treaties are not to be violated, nor the blood of Englishmen shed without retribution. Every time an assassination has occurred the Japanese ministers have expressed their sorrow for the occurrence; and on one occasion, in token of sympathy, they sent Sir Rutherford Alcock a basket of ducks and a jar of sugar. He returned them with the severe remark, that he required justice and redress at the hands of the Government—not sugar and ducks! Unfortunately, the only redress we have hitherto been able to obtain is a pecuniary compensation. The fine, or, as it may be more correctly termed, the blood-money, has been paid, but the danger has not been lessened; and while important concessions have been made on our part, at the urgent request of the Japanese Government, we have never received the equivalents we have demanded for this modification of our treaty rights. The time gained by the Government of the Tycoon has been spent in the most active preparations for war. Cannon have been cast, batteries erected, a school for musketry established, steamships bought and manned, and “enough powder expended in ball practice and drill to have supplied ammunition for a campaign.” There are moments in the history of nations, as well as in the lives of men, which, if employed with due energy and spirit, may prove invaluable for good.

We do not venture to affirm that the night which followed the death of poor Richardson was one of these crises; but this we know, that the long space of time which elapsed between Colonel Neale's despatch to England and Earl Russell's reply was not only taken advantage of by the Japanese Government; but was diligently employed by Prince Satsuma in strengthening his defences and in preparing for war.

The murder of Mr. Richardson occurred in September, 1862; and on the 24th of December our Foreign Secretary wrote a despatch to Colonel Neale, instructing him to demand from the Japanese Government an ample and formal apology, and the payment of £100,000, as a penalty on Japan for the offence; and at the same time to require from the Prince Satsuma the immediate trial and capital execution, in the presence of one or more of her Majesty's naval officers, of the chief perpetrators of the murder; together with the payment of £25,000, to be distributed to the relations of the murdered man and those who were assaulted with him. In the event of these demands being refused, Earl Russell authorized the admiral on the station to adopt such measures as he might judge best calculated to attain the end proposed. In the month of June last, Colonel Neale wrote to inform Earl Russell that he had received the whole of the indemnities demanded by her Majesty's Government from the Government at Yedo, amounting to £110,000 sterling. This sum included the amount required for the families of the guards, who, as we have related, were murdered at the legation in the summer of the same year. In July, Colonel Neale transmitted a formal apology from the Japanese Government; and in August he related how a British squadron had been despatched to Kagosima, the residence of the Prince Satsuma, and had cast anchor before the batteries of that town. The despatch containing the demands of the British Government was delivered; and the answer received by Prince Satsuma's counsellors being utterly evasive, Admiral Kuper directed Captain Borlase to proceed with a portion of the squadron to a bay lying to the northward of Kagosima, in order to seize three steamers, the property of the Prince. This service was effected "with much zeal and discretion," but it led to immediate hostilities on the part of the Japanese, who opened fire on the squadron with shot and shell. The fire was returned, and Admiral Kuper states, "Many guns were observed to be dismounted, the batteries were several times cleared, and the explosion of various magazines gave evidence of the destructive effects of our shell. One half of the town was in flames, and entirely destroyed; as well as a very extensive arsenal, or factory, and a gun foundry." On the next day the British squadron steamed out to the southward of the island, in order to shell the batteries on the Sakura Sima side, and to destroy the palace of the Prince. "These operations," writes Admiral Kuper, "were attended with complete success. There is every reason to suppose that the palace has been destroyed, as many shells were seen to burst in it; and the fire, which is still raging, affords reasonable ground

for believing that the entire town of Kagosima is now a mass of ruins." This action, however, was not performed without the loss, in killed and wounded, of sixty-three men, including Captains Josling and Wilmot, two of the ablest officers in the service.

Such is the last melancholy news from Japan; and whether the severe measures resorted to were necessary or no, we fear that it argues ill for our future relations with that strange country. We are not at strife with the Government of the Tycoon, which, indeed, has appeared to sanction the course we have adopted; but the destruction of a city which contained 180,000 souls is not likely to propitiate the Japanese, or to render them more friendly in their intercourse with foreigners. The arch-offender has not been taken, and hundreds of innocent men, women, and children may have perished by the most horrible of deaths. The desolation we have effected may have been necessary, but it is none the less awful. It is strange that the power of Great Britain in India and the Far East has been ever in the first place testified by the sword. The shock of battle has been felt before the sound of the gospel has been heard, and the glad tidings of great joy have been proclaimed for the first time by the conquerors to the conquered. This result is to be deplored, but it almost seems inevitable. The Peace Society, indeed, recommends that we should withdraw from the Japanese empire altogether. "It is not likely," they say, "that commerce can be successfully prosecuted with a reluctant and angry people; and even if it could, it would be more honourable for a Christian nation to make some sacrifice of commercial advantage rather than inaugurate among another people what may prove to be a long course of disorder and blood." On the other hand it is argued, and with great truth, that hitherto all the aggression has been on the side of the Japanese; that no nation has a right to isolate itself from the rest of mankind; that if we were to remove from Japan, Russia would immediately gain the military predominance she has long been striving after in those seas; that France would also be tempted to "annex"—and the recent murder of a French officer will afford her an excuse for military occupation;—that America and Holland, jealous as they both are of England, would grasp at every advantage which might be gained by our withdrawal; and that our vast and yearly increasing commerce with China would be seriously endangered. These are strong arguments, and a reference to the statistics of our trade with Japan itself will give them additional weight; for we find, on comparing the first six months of 1862 with the same period of last year, that more than double the number of foreign vessels arrived at the port of Kanagawa in 1863; that in four years the supply of silk has been increased more than fourfold, and that the first year's contribution of cotton from Japan amounted to 9,000 bales. These facts suffice to prove that the Japanese people are willing and capable of trading with foreign countries; and they confirm the belief of those who are best acquainted with Japanese politics, that the difficulties we have met with in

the empire arise mainly from the conservative policy of the Daimios. Some of us, indeed, may think lightly of the prospective advantages which are anticipated from trade with Japan; some few may count it a misfortune that we ever hoisted a consular flag at Yedo; but who is there that would not deem it pusillanimous to leave the country because the articles of our treaty have been violated, and the lives of Englishmen endangered? Yet it will doubtless be a melancholy alternative, if we find it impossible to maintain our position save by force of arms, and are compelled to engage in a struggle in which victory, however complete, will prove a barren honour.*

JOHN DENNIS.

* Since writing the above, several conflicting statements have been received from Japan. One telegram informs us that all foreigners are ordered to leave the country; another, that Prince Satsuma has promised to afford satisfaction for the murder of Mr. Richardson, and to erect a mausoleum over his remains. Moreover, news has been received through Paris that "at an extraordinary meeting of Daimios it was decided, by sixty-six votes against forty-seven, that there was no ground for declaring war against foreigners." It may, perhaps, be viewed as a good omen, that a long period has elapsed without any hostile measures being adopted on either side.

THE ACCEPTED SACRIFICE.

' A DREAM.

UPON a lonely altar burn'd
 With steady flame a quenchless fire ;
 A man, with calm and thoughtful brow,
 Stood gazing on the solemn pyre.

Darkness around, and clouds above,
 A wrestling heart, a starless sky ;
 But God is witnessing the strife,
 And sees the coming victory.

"Take Thou my wealth !" he pray'd, and cast
 Thereon the heap of glittering ore ;
 "Give Me thine *all* !" a voice replied,
 And low the flame burn'd as before.

"I give my rank ;"—the blazon'd scroll
 Shrank shrivell'd in the radiant heat :
 He sigh'd, and dropp'd his wreath of fame ;
 It fell in ashes at his feet.

Hot tears of anguish sear'd his cheek.
 "Give Me thine *all* !" the whisper fell ;
 And in the flame he laid his love,
 The human idol prized too well.

"All else is light," he said, and cast
 The love of self in that bright fire ;
 A star gleam'd forth through mist above,
 And clearer rose the flame, and higher.

"What wouldst Thou more ?" Again that voice ;
 "Give Me thine *heart* !" it gently said.
 He gave it—wounded, broken, sore ;
 And even as he gave, it bled.

Leap'd up to heaven that altar fire !—
 Broke sudden light !—The dream was o'er :
 His treasures safe, he learn'd to prize
 And use them worthier than before.

CURE BY Y² TOUCH.

ASSUME that in the present year of grace, 1864, her most gracious Majesty Victoria should cause the following announcement to go forth:—
 “Whereas, *agreeable** to representations duly made by her Majesty’s officers of health by law ordained and appointed, there be divers persons of both sexes in these her Majesty’s realms, afflicted with the malady known as scrofula, or king’s evil, and to whom physic and chirurgery give no relief: Whereas, furthermore, it hath been testified by divines, physicians, chirurgeons, and divers other learned men, that the power of curing the aforesaid disease, by stroking with the Royal hand, hath been given to Sovereigns of this realm from Edward the Confessor downwards: Therefore, by the advice of her Majesty’s Lords spiritual and temporal in council assembled, it is ordained, that henceforth and until further notice, such of her Majesty’s subjects as be stricken of the disease, and long for cure through the imposition of Royal hands, shall repair to Buckingham Palace at 10 of the clock on the first Monday of every month, and be holpen accordingly. Given under our hand and seal this blank day of blank month,” &c., &c.:—assume, I say, a proclamation of the sort to have gone forth; then contemplate the probable reception of it. First, in respect of the candidates themselves—individuals stricken of scrofula or king’s evil—I have no doubt they would be numerous. I have as little doubt that many, honestly believing themselves better for the royal imposition of hands, would pronounce themselves cured. Then a considerable number, feeling no better for the touching, would, nevertheless, testify to the cure, prompted by a certain spirit of subserviency (toadyism I think they call it), to the influence of which some individuals have ever been prone, and ever will be. If, in reviving the pretension, the practice were also revived of hanging a gold medal round the neck of each candidate, then, doubtless, witnesses to the truth, as by royal proclamation set forth, would be still more numerous. As for lookers on—individuals not stricken with disease, yet called upon to offer some sort of opinion, it may be testimony—probably the result might be as it was of old. A considerable portion of the educated classes, starting with testimony of cures performed, would supply what they might conceive to be the *ratio medendi*. Amongst dissentients the majority would veil their dissent, actuated by the desire of peace and quietness; leaving the minority to be snubbed into sneering acquiescence by combined force of State and Church, fashion and interest; aided by certain professors of law and physic, perhaps; and, for certain, a legion of sycophants.

Even so *was* the result, and so it would be again. Assuredly, if the

* *Agreeable*, not *agreeably*, let the reader be assured, is Civil Service Queen’s English, as by authority decreed and by precedent consecrated.

belief in spirit-rapping and table-turning can find acceptance, credence in the efficacy of the royal touch should not be a matter of surprise. Mesmerism, indeed, has prepared the way for a revival of the belief; inasmuch as (accepting the evidence furnished by mesmerists as reliable) cures of diseases by gentle passes of the hand, similar to the act of caressing a cat,* are by no means uncommon. The real difficulty would consist, not in re-establishing a faith in the efficacy of the royal imposition of hands, but in discriminating between the properties and characteristics of what might seem to uneducated people analogous or closely allied operations. A few words in explanation will make my meaning apparent. To begin with the frictional treatment of various diseases, rheumatism and paralysis for example, this method is of high antiquity and considerable present repute. Now, if the practice of curing by royal touch were re-established, one may rest assured that certain disaffected subjects and evil-disposed critics would be found endeavouring to prove the identity of *medendi ratio* between the royal "smoothing down" and any ordinary friction. This, though a matter of high treason, would hardly, I fear, in the present depraved state of public opinion, induce the proper consequences of that crime—hanging, drawing, and quartering. Again, it was usual with British sovereigns in times gone by to supplement the health-bestowing, sliding touch with the dotation of a coin or medal, usually of gold, to be suspended from the neck by a ribbon. Now this circumstance would assuredly be cited by disaffected and heretical people, having faith in relics and amulets, as evidence to prove that the virtue of gold was all in all—the sovereign nothing. Such an opinion would of course (argue my authorities) be both wicked and absurd. "To dispute the matter of fact, says Collier, in his Ecclesiastical History, "is to go to the extreme of scepticism, to deny our senses, and to be incredulous even to ridiculousness." "King Edward the Confessor was the first," says Collier, in another place, "who cured this distemper [king's evil], and from him it has descended as an hereditary gift upon all his successors." And as though this testimony were not enough, the same author, in another place, writes, "That Edward the Confessor cured the king's evil is beyond dispute. The first person cured by the King was a young woman; the manner was by stroking the affected place with his hand."

Now I desire to be impartial, as concerns the ability of British kings and queens to cure by imposition of royal hands and gentle smoothing down (not to be confounded with friction); that allegation rests, I say,

* Hence the expression, "*stroking for the evil*," formerly universal. During the reign of Charles II. several private gentlemen acquired high repute as stokers. An Irish gentleman, named Valentine Greatracks, was the most celebrated of these. Many notabilities of the day were treated by Greatracks, among them Boyle and Cudworth. Considerable jealousy was manifested against these private stokers. It was maintained by High Church and King people, that cure by this operation was a special prerogative of his dread Majesty (Charles II.).

on the testimony of so many bishops, clergymen, physicians, surgeons, nay, even people averse to kingly authority, either in the abstract or otherwise, *e. g.*, Roman Catholics, Quakers, and other Nonconformists,—that to doubt its reality would not be easy. How, for example, shall we dispose of the testimony of John Brown, Chirurgeon in Ordinary to his Majesty Charles II., surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital, and author of many learned works on surgery and anatomy? An inkling of that testimony one gets in the title-page of his book, "*Charisma Basilicon, or the Royal Gift of healing Strumae, or King's Evil, by contact or imposition of the sacred hands of our Kings of England and of France, given them on their inauguration. The whole concluded with above 60 admirable cures performed, with and without gold, by his Majesty's benediction, by his late Majesty's pretious blood, and the like.*" The "*Charisma Basilicon*" is dedicated to the Right Honourable and Right Reverend Father in God, Nathaniel, Lord Bishop of Durham, and Clerk of the Closet to his Majesty. Chirurgeon Brown, addressing the bishop in a dedication, commits himself to an opinion of speculative physiology.

"Whosoever considers [writes he] the daily blessings our three kingdoms do receive from his sacred Majesty [*i. e.*, Charles II.], must necessarily be convinced that, as the animal faculties lodge in his royal head, which gives that sense to every affair we prosecute, so his sacred hands are sweetened with that sacred, salutiferous gift of healing, which both supports the body politick and keeps up the denizens and subjects thereof in vigor and courage. My Lord [*i. e.*, the bishop], the eminent and well-deserved place your honor enjoys in the king's presence, as well as in his princely and royal palace, being Clerk to the Closet of his sacred Majesty, do's not only place you near your Sovereign, but puts you at his right hand, by whose clean hands the royal gold, which is used at our daily healings, is presented to our sacred Majesty. And this makes you as great a judge as observer of these his wonderful and miraculous cures, so frequently made good by his sacred hands: the which, as they have been infinite in numbers, so ought they to be accounted miraculous in their nature." Thus inferentially, you see, my Lord Bishop testifies to the fact; and were time and space more propitious, dozens of bishops might be cited who testified directly. Are we to believe this mass of evidence? Do *I* believe it?—not, that is to say, in any reserved non-natural sense; but plainly, literally, chapter by chapter, phrase by phrase, line by line, word by word? Ay, to be sure I believe that, if viewed with relation to the subject it really refers to—the state, mentally and morally, of those to whom it was addressed, and the effect it was intended to convey,—it will bear the pressure of any test applied to it. Should some disparager of the divinity of kings affirm the contrary, then my reply is, "I must attend to other duties than a controversy with one who has been so ably encountered."

To doubt the efficiency of royal touch is, let us admit, for peace and quietness' sake, impossible; but having studied candidly every aspect of

the case, and weighed impartially a vast array of evidence, I am unable to endorse the extreme opinion, that the gold, silver, or other token given by the Sovereign was absolutely without influence on the malady. In support of this opinion, very deferentially advanced, I may be permitted to cite a case recorded by Mr. Dicken, Sergeant-Surgeon to Queen Anne. By reason of his position as sergeant-surgeon, it was a part of this gentleman's duty to select and pass suitable candidates for the Queen's touch. Once upon a time, he relates, a certain woman applied to him as a candidate for royal hand imposition, but not liking her appearance, he was reluctant to make the presentation. He judged from the individual's look that she only wanted the gold, which, when obtained, she would be base enough to hypothecate with Jew or Lombard—perhaps sell outright. Pleading hard, however, this woman's request was granted: the queenly touch being vouchsafed, and the gold presented, behold, the cripple was healed. Years passed, and the stricken one came again. The sergeant-surgeon, thoroughly up to his duty, recognized an old face, and addressing the woman, said, "I've seen thee before;" whereupon she fell upon her knees, owned the crime of selling the coin, pleaded for another, and vowed she would keep it till the day of doom. As her symptoms were very bad, the doctor strained a point, and introduced her a second time; whereupon another stroking, another medal, and another cure. This case proves that in the instance cited the medal had something at least to do with the cure.

As a set-off, take one of different purport, Charles the Martyr being operator. The result distinctly proves that his dread Majesty's power of healing was so great as to be wholly independent of the aid of an amulet. There was a certain Robert Cole, an innkeeper at Winton, that was highly diseased with the king's evil. His Majesty, being about this time removed from the Isle of Wight, passed through Winton, when this object of charity, pressing to come near the Sacred Person, was prevented, and ill-treated by the soldiers. Upon which, he making several exclamations of "God save the King!" it reached his sacred ears, when our dread sovereign gave the weak and despairing man his blessing, in the like words to these,—“I see thou art not permitted to come near me, and I cannot tell what thou wouldst have; but God bless thee, and grant thy desire.” After which, and without the King's stroking, the diseased man returned to the liquor he had formerly washed his sores with; upon which the water wasted until it was quite dried up. Still more wonderful to relate, scales began to cover the bottle on its outside, and as they did increase on the bottle, so did they diminish on the body of the aforesaid Robert Cole. One day a lady, moved by curiosity, to which the sex is prone, did essay to remove these scales from the bottle. Robert Cole was distant at the time; nevertheless, as every scale was plucked from the bottle, so was he filled with agonies even “unto y^e marrowe.” “Now, I challenge all y^e scepticks upon y^e earth to produce an instance more astonishing than this,” exclaims my authority. Well he might!

This result will, I think, demonstrate beyond cavil that his dread Majesty the royal martyr could cure not only without aid of gold, but even without imposition of hands, so lively was the divine power of healing in that royal person.

Divers ill-disposed subjects, revilers of the divine power, sought to make it appear that the sole efficacy of the process was referable to the sign of the cross wherewith it was accompanied. Hersin, however, the same do egregiously err, as the following testimony shall prove:—The Virgin Queen, of blessed memory, never used the sign of the cross, nor was that Popish emblem again used until the reign of James II. Nevertheless, the divine power of cure never streamed so prodigally from the fingers' ends of British sovereigns as when the sign of the cross was no longer used; notably from the hands of his dread Majesty of blessed memory, Charles II.

By this time the benevolent reader, confused by recitals which I shall not wonder if he call a farrago of nonsense, may feel inclined to exclaim with Faust, when confused with the mad chattering of the Bloekberg witches,—

“Mir widersteht das tolle Zauberwesen.”

The wildness of narrative, the “*Tollheit*,” is, however, in no degree attributable to the scribe who condenses, out of solemnly attested records many, this bare recital of a pretension urged by and on behalf of British sovereigns:—attested by divines, physicians, surgeons, by the score; defended by the terrors of impending high treason; only relinquished by George III., seemingly for family and domestic reasons, to which further allusion may have to be made by-and-bye; and, for aught I can learn to the contrary, still a constructive article of belief with orthodox members of the Established Church—inasmuch as belief in the divine gift of healing vouchsafed to kings (as it was formerly called), once so strenuously upheld by high dignitaries of the Established Church, has at no time been unequivocally revoked.

The pretension, or function—call it which pleases you best—of royal cure by the touch, illustrates by its records, as seen in English history—and by apologue, of course—a certain old proverb about what will happen to—well, not a king, if rope enough be given. I do not think any author has ever written so fully as the case merits on the troubles which may afflict individuals through being permitted to have their own way,—the embarrassments, the humiliations. It is a topic that many of us might reflect upon with great gain to personal happiness. Youth of both sexes are invited to think on this matter, especially young ladies. It was through unlucky heedlessness of the results that may come of having one's own way that the English king of olden time, whatever his name (and on this point history is confused), proclaimed to his loving subjects that, by virtue of a certain divine grace within him, he possessed an unlimited

power of healing. What could be more delightful than such a right royal announcement at any time, the more especially at a time when medicine and surgery were both so barbarous? *Benevole lector*, if you should tell me that you could change my own grey hair to raven black by stroking it with your hand, why need we waste words about it? I might, without imputation of high treason, say nay; but why *should* I say nay? Lifting my hat, I would bid you come and do it. When kings and queens began to heal by imposition of hands and stroking, they had formed no consistent theory of the *ratio medendi*. It is natural for the human mind to invest persons in authority with exalted attributes. Probably no ruler of men was ever spoken of during life by subjects as not being stamped with some sort of excellence beyond that of the governed. What happens in the empire of bees seems to have prompted the notion. A queen bee is obviously different from a common bee—handsomer, bigger, every way more majestic. She bears imprinted on her front and figure the stamp of heroism unmistakable. Notwithstanding this profound physical difference between her Majesty the Queen Bee and her subjects the common bees, her Majesty—as good old blind man Huber satisfactorily made out—was a common bee once, only having risen to the physical majesty of queendom through sheer force of refined diet.* It might be worth while to try whether something similar to the physical exaltation wrought by attention to diet on bees might not be effected upon young people in legitimate succession to thrones. Had rulers of men been endowed with a distinct, heroic cast of form and feature, there might have been less of that baneful scepticism concerning the divinity of kings. Such outward sign of physical superiority not having been always vouchsafed to kings and queens, it behoved them to illustrate the divinity of their appointment by the display of moral and spiritual qualities; amongst which the assumed power of curing diseases by the touch must be numbered. Some pretension of this sort has been pretty common amongst rulers, temporal as well as spiritual, in most countries and at most times; but it is wholly in respect of the healings performed by kings and queens of England that we have now to concern ourselves.

Nothing like a consistent account of curing by the touch, as possessed by British sovereigns, can be found prior to the reign of Henry VII.; nor is this wonderful when we remember that printing had only then just come to be substituted for the tedious process of hand copying. It was remarked by Lord Bacon, that Henry always showed great partiality for the observance of forms and ceremonies. This monarch's title to the English crown was none of the best—to speak plainly, he may be called a usurper. Desirous

* If by any accident a queen bee dies, a successor, equal to her in every respect, of heroic stature and bearing, is manufactured out of a common bee, which, being walled into a special apartment, and fed on a particular sort of food, is thereby metamorphosed into a queen bee.

(so runs the argument of such as revile the divinity of kings) of some token whereby he might assure his subjects that the divine blessing was upon him, Henry laid his royal hand, with doubt and trembling, upon a scrofula-stricken patient, whereupon the latter was cured. This discovery made, Richmond began to hold up his kingly head right royally, like any other legitimate, Heaven-appointed king. Grateful at the manifestation of such healing power through strokings by the royal hand, Henry (thus do evil-disposed traducers allege) began to scan the chronicles of his predecessors for examples of previous cures effected. He studied the ceremonies that had been adopted on these occasions, retaining several, and adding others. All that had hitherto, in the matter of royal healing, been conducted arbitrarily, was now codified into a system. This monarch was the first amongst English sovereigns who accompanied the stroking with the substantial token of a fair rose noble, the coin being suspended from the neck by a piece of white ribbon. Evil-disposed people are never at a loss for pretexts for venting their malevolence; accordingly, the like have urged that this royal dotation of a piece of gold was nothing else than a bribe for testimony, an inducement for a patient to swear he was cured—whereas, without the gold he might not have seemed to see it. As if an English cripple, chastened by disease, *temp.* Henry VII., would have given false testimony for a paltry bit of gold!—or, for the matter of that, any other cripple!

The curative strokings of Henry VII. are worthy a philosopher's deepest consideration, both as regards the royal person and the outward ceremonies he vouchsafed to use in performing his cures. The point is thoroughly well made out that God, in recognizing kings, does what mankind are now wont to do—i. e., recognizes them *de facto*. Richmond could advance no claim to what certain weak-minded people call legitimacy. Pooh! pooh! Richard being out of the way, Richmond put the crown on his own head; and thenceforth, before the eyes of man he stood a king. Of man, did I write? ay, and of Heaven too;—how else could he have cured the evil as well as any other king?

Treating the subject-matter in hand historically, we next come to our British Bluebeard of divine succession: divine inasmuch as Henry VII. had been permitted to display, through the gift of healing, his acceptance of Heaven. As a medical and surgical stroker, Henry VIII. was even more renowned than his royal father; and to some, the cures effected by this king will appear the more extraordinary that they were performed in despite of the anathemas and fulminations of Rome. Not only was Henry VIII. most powerful in the cure of scrofula, or king's evil, by imposition of hands with stroking, but he also acquired much celebrity for the cure of cramps. The latter operation he did not accomplish by stroking, but either through the influence of certain rings, known as cramp rings, or through some occult emanation of the kingly power, of which cramp rings were a token. For some reason, the explanation of which, so far as I am

aware, has never been vouchsafed, the kingly office of stroking for the evil was not exercised by Edward VI. Mary certainly practised it, though scant notices of her Majesty's successes in this line have been handed down to us, most probably for the reason that all chroniclers of the royal gift whose testimony is now available were Protestants, incapable of doing justice to a queen, even in a matter of fact, whose faith differed from their own.

The reign of Elizabeth, considered in relation to the divine gift of cure by the touch, is remarkable in several particulars. It is remarkable for the lack of faith on the part of the virgin Queen herself, in respect of a virtue which, according to my testimony, she possessed in the highest exaltation of its excellence, and of which examples shall be set forth by-and-by. It is remarkable for the appearance of several books, all in defence and vindication of the royal prerogative,—books written not by ignorant men, but by authors of high repute, such as divines and surgeons practised in the cure of the very diseases operated upon by Majesty. Thus, Dr. William Tooker, a divine,* who wrote in this reign, testifies; in language the most unequivocal, to the virgin Queen's salutary power.† This author; not content with referring the first example of cure by imposition of royal hands with stroking to Edward the Confessor, carries the gift as far back as Laciús, by some supposed to be the first of our Christian kings. Perhaps the testimony to the Queen's power of cure by the touch rendered by Chirurgéon Clowes will be more satisfactory to some minds. This gentleman, a native of Warwickshire, served as surgeon both in naval and military expeditions of this reign. In consideration of surgical services rendered, he received a grant of arms in 1576. Clowes wrote many professional books; amongst others, one entitled, "A Right Fruitful and Approved Treatise of the Struma, &c.," the very disease, be it remembered, most amenable to cure by royal manipulation. Surely this is a question in which the testimony of one like Clowes—a contemporary, a professional expert—must be overpowering. What, then, is the testimony? Hear it, ye sceptics, and slink away abashed! He gives the whole particulars of a cure upon a scrofulous person, by the stroking of our virgin Queen, which he judged to be "more divine than humane," and he expressed the confident belief, "that upon failure of other methods of cure, people may expect relief from her Majesty."

I have stated that the Queen herself underrated the divine power that had been so miraculously vouchsafed. Thus it is recorded by Dr. Tooker, that when the Queen was in Gloucestershire, many poor people, afflicted with the disease, pressing upon her in an unruly manner, she let fall these words, "Alas, poor people! I cannot cure you; it is God alone who can do

* Sometime chaplain to Queen Elizabeth; afterwards canon of Exeter (place of his nativity); and later Dean of Lichfield.

† *Vide* his book, "Charisma, seu Donum Sanitatis."

so." Now, with Dean Tooker, I cannot but agree that the expression above cited has been wrested from its proper and legitimate meaning. Probably, what the Queen really *did* mean was, that she held herself to be, in this matter, no more than God's agent.* This capacity of healing—independent of will and belief of the royal person—thus demonstrated, is important. Being proven, the delicate question arises, whether any English sovereign has a constitutional right to abandon a practice so fraught with blessing? Of this perhaps more anon.

Wonderful though the examples of royal cure already cited, it was reserved for the line of Stuart sovereigns to display the divine gift in all its full-blown excellence. I have already discussed the question whether the coin or medal bequeathed had any efficacy. I think we must admit that it counted for something. The British Solomon, as he has been not unaptly called, devoted the whole energy of his great mind to solve some long outstanding doubts relative to this metallic question. As I understand the case, her Majesty came to the conclusion that a metallic gift was useful "as an adjuvant," to express one's self homoeopathically;† but to this monarch's investigations we owe the discovery of the truth that *silver's as good's as gold's* (how very Scotch!). Accordingly, silver was often used in the ensuing reign. Charles the Martyr, poor King! had not always gold; so the discovery to him was of great practical importance: greater, however, the discovery already noted of this monarch's ability to cure by simple benediction. Charles II. reverted to the gold; but when Doctor Johnson presented himself to be operated upon by Queen Anne, he only received a shabby bit of silver.‡

In pursuing our sketch we now come to the troubled reign of Charles I., when all that had hitherto been seen in the cure of diseases by royal influence was fairly eclipsed. The very successes of the royal martyr are, however, by some adverse critics, deemed unfavourable to the general pretensions of royal cure by manipulation. It is advanced that the evidence proves too much; that the cases belong to the general category of saintly miracles. In the beginning of this narrative I had occasion to quote the particulars of a cure effected by the martyred king that can only be called miraculous. Others, by the hundred if not by the thousand, could easily be cited, did space, need, and occasion offer. They will be found recorded in several good books, published mostly during the succeeding reign.

The divine gift attained, if not its highest excellence, its broadest

* Nevertheless, the practice of touching for the evil was discontinued by Queen Elizabeth at a certain period of her reign.

† Homoeopathic practitioners frequently promote the action of a ten billionth part of a grain of powdered flint by half an ounce of castor oil, administered as an adjuvant.

‡ Now held as a relic by the Duke of Devonshire.

expansion, in the reign of Charles II. True, this king could not cure by mere prayer and benediction, as his royal parent was wont to do; true, the smoothing manipulation was needed in his case; yet, when we remember that the dread sovereign stroked for the evil no less than ninety-two thousand one hundred and seven in twenty years, being on the average twelve per diem, all of whom, according to my authorities, he cured, we must admit the virtue of cure by stroking, as distinguished from cure by mere benediction, to have attained its highest development.

The history of cure by touch, in the middle and latter part of the seventeenth century, would not be complete without reference to cures performed, or said to have been performed, by private individuals. In preceding reigns the impression had been very general that, in such cases as demonstrated the power of cure by manipulation, the result was attributable, in some measure, to witchcraft. Thus the preamble of a statute of Henry VIII., in 1511, sets forth, "that smiths, weavers, and women, boldly and unacustomably, take upon them great cures, in which they partly use sorcery and witchcraft." In the next century, however, and mostly in the reign of Charles II., several private individuals, against whose character no evil could be justly alleged, became conspicuous under the name of "strokers." Of these the most renowned were Valentine Greatrakes, an Irish gentleman, Dr. Streper, and a gardener called Leverett. Of Greatrakes the Lord Bishop of Derry declared that he had seen dimness cleared and deafness cured, pain drawn out at some extreme part, grievous sores in a few days healed, obstructions and stoppages removed, and cancerous knots in breasts dissolved. It is easy to gather from perusal of contemporary records, that these private manipulators were considered by some to trench upon the kingly prerogative. Thus Dr. Thomas Allen * dissuades persons from applying themselves to seventh sons of those strokers; but these seem to have found much favour nevertheless. Some quality in their times there seemed to be favourable to the transmission of influence through manipulation. Nor was this manipulation peculiar to the Old World, according to Dr. Cotton Mather, who, in his "*Magnalia Christi Americana*," states it was no rare thing for the old set of Quakers to proselyte people merely by "stroking them, or breathing upon them." Properly investigated, a complete distinction is established between these cures by private individuals and the cures effected by sovereigns. In the former case the cure was exhausting, always needing effort, expenditure of vital force; in the latter case otherwise. On this point accept the testimony of Leverett the gardener:—"I am more exhausted by stroking thirty or forty people than by digging eight roods of ground," said he; whereas the circumstance has already been noted, that

* "The Excellency; or, the Handywork of the Royal Hand, dedicated to the Duke of York," by Dr. Thomas Allen, sometime of Caius College, Camb.; afterwards physician to Charles II.

Charles II. stroked on an average twelve per diem for twenty years, thus making up a sum total of ninety-two thousand one hundred and seven—a sufficient proof that the kingly operation could not have been exhausting. As lamps burn brightest just before their lights expire, so was it thought by divers learned men, witnesses of the exceeding power of the divine gift as manifested by Charles II., that with him that power would end. Guided by the doctrine of type and antitype, Dr. John Bird* was led to this conclusion through Scripture analogy. "Now, according to Scripture and reason," writes he, "as the precious oyle ceased to be when Christ had suffered, and as the substance being come so the shadow goes away, and there is no reason to expect a sign when y^e thing signified thereby is now come, I conclude that our royal Sovereign will be the last of the kings of this nation to whom God will give the gift of healing the king's evil." I need not point out the fallacy of this surmise, cure by royal touch having been publicly used down to the reign of George III.

Having now treated fully, as space permits, with this blessed gift, "vouchsafed solely to the kings, by grace of God, of Great Britain and France, and denied to other Christian kings,"† it may not be amiss to present the reader with a few of the disparaging and venomous cavillings that certain evil-disposed persons have used to cast doubt and ridicule upon the royal gift. The circumstance cannot fail to be noticed, they argue, that just in proportion as the title to the crown was weak or uncertain, or that a belief in the divinity of kingcraft had need of extraneous support; then, ostentatiously, and, as it might seem, perversely, the Sovereign power to cure by touch and stroking was vaunted to the highest. Then (they say), the legitimacy of Henry VII. was none of the best, yet he dispensed the healing aura from his fingers' ends with the freedom of a spendthrift and the efficacy of a saint. Then consider the reign of Henry VIII. (they say). At that time, doubts having arisen as to the power of that monarch to cure after the fashion of his predecessors; because of the Pope's anathema, the doubt was set at rest by the monarch's not only stroking for the evil with effect, but curing cramp as well. Then these evil-disposed critics urge that, so long as British kings and queens remained on good terms with Rome; the pretence, or reality, of curing by manipulation met with no sort of opposition by the clergy, nor were the grounds upon which the claim was based scrutinized over-rigidly. After the schism between Church and State, however (so they say), it would be a tendency of the ancient Church to prove that the royal gift of cure by stroking was imparted through priestly benediction, not inherited; that, moreover, it was not imparted in perpetuity to a sovereign, but *quandiu se bene gesserit*. The case does not admit of doubt (so they allege), that so long as it was

* "Ostenta Carolina."

† Clowes. N.B.—Our author means kings and queens. He was Elizabeth's own surgeon, and frequently testifies to her Majesty's healing virtues.

convenient for Church and King to remain in good accord, the spiritual theory of imparted virtue would be adopted as most consistent. All other theories are so manifestly inconsistent (they say), that, being adopted, the fallacy must necessarily be detected at once. To have admitted the healing faculty of kings and queens as being of the same sort with the healing faculty of seventh sons and other common strokers, would be (say they) an obvious abrogation of regal prerogative. To have attributed a cure wrought to the power of a medal given, would, again, not have been politic. In the interests of kingcraft it was always necessary to show that the virtue was neither personal nor symbolical; neither the result of ordinary stroking nor of influences conveyed through a mere piece of metal: wherefore (they go on to say), when ties between Rome and the British throne were severed, the pretence of cure by stroking began to sit uneasily on British kings. It is easy to perceive (so allege the scoffers) that the pretension of this virtue was made a ground of violent religious contest even so early as the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth,* and only restrained within bounds by the fear of indictment for high treason.†

We pass on now to the Restoration, accepting for our guidance in the matter of cure by the royal touch contemporary records, especially the "*Ostenta Carolina*" of John Bird, already adverted to. Some scoffing traducer of the divinity of kings has committed himself, I observe, in writing thus:—

"Let us take a glance at the political relations of this epoch; inasmuch as the contemplation will help us to a fair understanding of the position and prospects of cure by the touch, and stroking of kingly hands, at this epoch. The Church and State party having caught their king, it was an object of first importance with them to set him off to the best advantage. The erroneous and strange doctrine that kings were even as common men, not Heaven-appointed and Heaven-inspired, had to be opposed. The public had to be brought to a due state of reverence for sovereignty restored; and, inasmuch as the memory of Cromwell could not be swept away, policy of Church and State dictated that it should be made to seem hateful, if not contemptible. To this end superstition was invoked, and there were divers manifestations of it. High Church and State pamphleteers

* And yet, if we are to believe Clowes, instances occurred of cures wrought by the Virgin Queen upon Catholics—said Catholics being driven to afford testimony thereto. A letter from a gentleman at Rome, published in London, anno 1721, confirms the above:—"A Roman Catholic in Elizabeth's reign," writes he, "grew terribly afflicted with the king's evil. Having applied to doctors without success, he was at last touched by the Queen, and perfectly cured. Being asked how the matter stood with him, his answer was, 'He was now satisfied, by experimental proof, that the Pope's excommunication of her Majesty signified nothing.'"

† Much later, i.e., in 1634, Thomas Russell was tried for high treason, for having spoken contemptuously of the king's touch (Wadd's "*Maxims and Memoirs*").

testified to the appearance of supernatural beings coming before mortals with political intent. These supernatural visitors, though diverse in their aspects, were referable to one of two categories: bad spirits, coming in grotesque shapes, such as of black dogs, bears, hyenas, &c., all smelling abominably of brimstone; and good spirits, decently robed in white garments—George Cruikshank notwithstanding. As for the bad lot, they—according to pamphleteers of the time—so soon as conjured, were wont to change into their proper shapes, *videlicet*, Cromwell, Ireton, Bradshaw, *id genus omne*, then disappear howling. In short, the revelations of spirit-land proved that king-killing was looked upon as no small matter up yonder. On one point of testimony black spirits and white were unanimous, and it was this,—Britons would never prosper again until they had atoned for beheading the father by long years of worship to the son. The tendency of the age was to establish the restored king as demigod. If Charles II. had happened to be cast in a religious mould, whereby the pretensions of his adulators could have been seconded, then, like to Japan, we might have had a Mikado. The spirit moved our restored sovereign otherwise; he worshipped fervently indeed, but at a pagan shrine." In this strain does an evil-disposed writer proceed to lengths whither I scorn to follow him. The tendency of his reasonings is only too plain:—let every good subject beware of the poison.

With Charles II. the majestic days of regal cure by stroking of hands departed; not that any abatement of the divine gift had followed, so far as I can learn, but for the reason that a certain perverse hardness of heart had afflicted the multitude. The good gifts of Heaven cannot be spurned with impunity. That his gracious Majesty George III. abandoned the practice of stroking for the evil I have already recorded. Had he wisely kept to the ways of his forefathers, need for tall neckcloths in the succeeding reign there might not perhaps have been. George IV. might then, perhaps, have inaugurated the epoch of neck-ribbons and paper turn-downs. Beau Brummel might have left the study of starch to washerwomen: devoting himself to higher aims and nobler occupations.

PRIVATE LIFE OF THE ZULU KAFFIRS.

"*Jabo Inkosi Impofu Kona*" was the answer given to my inquiry, when I asked whether there were any elands near the kraal of my Kaffir visitor.

"Yes, sir, elands are there."

The prospect was a very tempting one; it was to pay a visit for a week to an almost unexplored district near the Imvoti river in Natal, to live like the Kaffirs themselves, to avoid houses and white men, and to endeavour to supply myself, dogs, Kaffirs, and host, with venison or other game.

The fine dry weather had set in, and, with the exception of a thunder-shower, there was no chance of rain for several weeks; the moon was in her first quarter, and she would, therefore, be full during my residence at the kraal, which I proposed making my head-quarters. My two horses were in admirable condition for a week's desert life,—that is, although they were in fair wind, yet they had plenty of flesh upon their bones; for a thin horse is almost sure to knock up if deprived for any length of time of regular or good food, whereas one that is fat seems to live on his fat when deprived of all else.

My two hunting Kaffirs were quite willing to accompany me on my journey, provided that I fed them well; and so with a slight reserve stock of provender, a plentiful supply of powder, bullets, small shot, and other necessary articles, I started at daybreak in pursuit of my dark companions, who had been sent forwards on the previous morning.

A ride of two days brought me within a few miles of the kraal of which I was in search; and by inquiring of the various Kaffirs, I was directed on my road, until at last I dismounted on a grassy slope, about fifty yards from the residence of my friend. Both my horses, being thoroughly trained for shooting purposes, were allowed to graze without even the restraint of a head-collar; the saddles and bridles were therefore taken off, and given in temporary charge of the only Kaffir who eventually dared to follow me into a strange kraal far away from his own people.

Before we enter into conversation with our Kaffir friend, we shall have time to examine the construction of the fabric which is spoken of as a kraal.

A circle of about forty yards in diameter is first marked out, round the circumference of which a thick palisading is erected, composed of the straightest branches of trees. These branches are about three or four inches in diameter, and eight or ten feet in height. In order to keep them together, pliant sticks are passed amongst them alternately in and out, whilst here and there they are lashed together by pieces of bullock's or buffalo's hide. There is only one entrance into this enclosure; it is about four feet wide, and is made by omitting some of the upright palings. The sides of this doorway are made stronger than is any other part of the

palisading, and when it is closed, no cattle can either enter or depart from the enclosure. The door is supposed to be shut when two stout poles are placed diagonally across the opening.

This fabric forms the exterior fence of the kraal.

Within the first circle a second is constructed, much in the same manner, the space between each being about eight or nine yards; thus the diameter of the interior enclosure amounts to about twenty-two yards.

In the space between the two fences, the huts or residences of the Kaffirs are placed. These consist of beehive-shaped straw buildings, about seven feet high in the middle, and about sixteen feet in diameter. They are built by the Kaffirs, and are almost always exact counterparts of each other.

Two upright poles, driven deeply into the ground, support the roof, whilst the other portions of the framework are firmly tied to them; the thatch being fastened on round the exterior of the framework.

A small, low doorway serves for ingress and egress. This doorway can be closed by means of a small basket-work door, which is held firmly in its place by a stout stick attached to it by a piece of hide. The door, being rather larger than the doorway, is pulled close over it, the stick being just long enough to pass through the doorway when held vertically, but when turned round horizontally, will hold the door firmly, because it will not pass through the opening when in that position.

Thus the kraal door can only be conveniently fastened by a person on the inside; but by inserting the hand inside the doorway, it can sometimes be managed. About a dozen of these huts are placed round the enclosure, and are each occupied by a family, which is commonly descended from the head man of the kraal, which thus consists of a large family party.

The furniture of these huts consists of one or two large clay vessels, several gourds of great size, a bundle of knobbed sticks, half a dozen assagays, some small snuff-boxes, formed out of lesser gourds, a collection of bead ornaments in the form of bracelets, armlets, and necklaces, some large blocks of wood to serve for pillows, and a skin bag, in which are various odds and ends, such as a tobacco-pipe, a tinder-box, a knife, and other useful adjuncts to the desert life.

The wardrobe of both the Kaffir gentlemen and ladies occupies no space, that of the men consisting only of strips of hide attached to a string worn round the waist; whilst the ladies are content with a short fringe of about eight inches in length, which they also fasten round their waists. When, however, the females visit the locality of white men, or expect such an important event to occur as the arrival of a white man at their kraal, they then usually don a robe of ox's hide, which reaches from their waist to their knees; but it is evident that, when thus hampered, they are not nearly so much at their ease as when in their more customary and unadorned condition.

It was near the hour of sunset when I entered the kraal; and soon after the cattle were driven home, and were safely enclosed inside the inner paling. About a dozen men then set busily to work milking the cows, a performance not accomplished without considerable difficulty, as some of the cows were very unruly, and seemed to prefer the society of their calves to that of the Kaffir men.

As soon as the mantle of darkness had spread itself over this wild land, there was an opportunity of observing the real private life of the Kaffirs. The work of the day had been finished, and it was now the hour for relaxation. My saddle, oilskin, and blanket, were carefully arranged between the two palisades, so that I might, when disposed, leave the festive scene within the hut, and enjoy a quiet sleep in a less unwholesome atmosphere. These preparations having been completed, I entered one of the huts into which I had been frequently invited. My host was lounging on the ground near the door, and was busily employed in piling up pieces of wood round a large earthen vessel which was simmering over the fire. On the opposite side of the hut were two excessively plump and young Kaffir maidens, who were busily shaking a couple of gourds, in order to convert the sweet milk (*ubin*) into thick curds (*amas*). Two minute black urchins, who seemed to have escaped from a gorilla mamma, crawled upon the smooth floor, and commenced a terrific screaming when the dreadful vision of a horrid white man was presented to them. A leg or a neck of each was seized by my Kaffir host, and the two inharmonious natives were cast into the darkness outside, where their screams were stopped by an ancient-looking dame, who rushed to the rescue.

Amidst the smoke and darkness it was difficult to discern clearly the whole of the interior of the hut; still I could perceive the white eyes of the Kaffir maidens.

It was indeed singular to contemplate the affinity which existed between apparently different members of the human race. Here, far removed from even the demi-civilization of our early colony, were two young girls, who seemed more nearly to resemble animals than human beings, and yet they exhibited those very characteristics which are usually practised by the fair daughters of the North.

The sly flame of the fire only occasionally permitted objects to be distinctly visible round the hut. The two damsels, however, had craftily altered their positions, so as to cause the shadow from the upright post to conceal as much as possible their faces and expressions. The arrival of a white visitor was a cause sufficient to interest the most apathetic old hag in the village; whilst it must, I well knew, be an event of no small importance to these young females, whose curiosity is by no means inferior to that of their northern sisters. In spite, however, of their anxiety to note the various peculiarities of my manner and appearance, they yet pretended to be fully occupied in shaking their gourds. When, however, they fancied that my attention was taken up with the host, then several sly

peeps would be taken, a *sotto voce* conversation carried on, and little self-satisfied laughs indicated that they thought their English visitor, who wrapped up his body in a number of strange-shaped garments, a most decided "guy."

It was not long, however, before there was a considerable increase to our party. Three or four older men than my host, a couple of elderly ladies, and two young Kaffirs, managed to squeeze into the hut, and we formed a circle round the fire.

It might have been by chance, but somehow I found myself sitting crouched up on the ground with one of the Kaffir maidens on each side of me. A good deal of "chaff" was going on between these dark damsels and my host; but it was of a very simple description, its foundation being whether they would like to be sold to the *umlungo* (white man).

I could not, at this point of our proceedings, avoid drawing a comparison between my then surroundings and those which had existed about two years previously, at which date I was staying in town. An evening party, or a *conversazione* in London was the scene which I pictured to my mind; then looking round at my immediate neighbours, whose full, rounded forms I fear glistened with the slightest suspicion of some unctuous material, I began speculating upon the sensation that would be produced did I enter a *salon* in town with one of these damsels on either arm. Yet here, in the wild, glowing country of south-eastern Africa, the whole "get up," or rather the absence thereof, seemed to be exactly what it ought to be; and I doubt whether it would not have seemed rather indelicate, had a lady, clothed in European costume, appeared as one of the group. Let me here remark that, in spite of the apparent inconsistency of the conditions, yet the natives in this locality were a comparatively moral race, and I believe that, taking even an extensive district, the Divorce Court would not be able to find even sufficient occupation to amuse it.

It was amusing to hear the speculations and questions connected with the white man; some of them were remarkably shrewd, and the arguments that ensued in connection with some of the subjects, indicated logical powers of no small capacity.

My meal was a simple one: a "coran," cut open and grilled on a stick, formed as good a supper as any hungry hunter could desire. The Kaffirs feasted on a mess of stewed beef and boiled corn, some of the latter being the common Indian corn; whilst another and a smaller kind, of a reddish tint, was plentifully supplied to each person. At about midnight several of the men left the kraal, and assembled in a neighbouring hut; I was told that they did so for a *kaluma* (talk), so I supposed there was some business on hand. I soon heard a great discussion going on, the voice of one speaker being very earnest, and seeming to predominate in the talk. For fully three hours the voices were heard, after which they may have continued, but sleep overcame me, and I was unconscious of all around. On the following morning, by dint of

questioning, I ascertained the cause of their controversy ;—it was certainly a singular one, to European ideas.

It seemed that one of the men of the kraal had purchased a wife, and had paid for her in part only, the whole sum being contingent upon the fruitfulness of the said wife. As luck would have it, the Kaffir found himself the father of twins in about a year after his marriage. The father of the bride, upon hearing of this event, demanded a trifle beyond the first-named price, in consequence of the great value of the female he had sold. The husband and his friends considered this claim unjust, and refused to accede to it ; and hence the discussion that I had heard during the night.

Before daybreak on the following morning all the residents of the kraal were up ; the cattle were turned out of the enclosure, and were driven by three or four boys to some good grazing ground. These boys were armed with assagays and knobbed sticks, and carried with them a little bag of Indian corn, as they were to keep watch all day. The women, with very few exceptions, went to work in some fields near ; they were hoeing some ground ready for a fresh crop : whilst a very large field of Indian corn near at hand, almost ready to pick, was watched by three or four young girls, who screamed and beat gourds when a flock of birds settled amongst the corn stumps.

Two of the men, who were the hunters of the party, went out in order to examine their traps, and one, being armed with an old flint musket, told me he thought he could kill a buck if he had some powder, a hint meant for my edification. Each individual seemed as though he or she knew exactly what was her especial work for the day, and went to this without objection or doubt. It was true the weather was warm, and perhaps a European woman might have found the work in the field somewhat laborious, but I doubt whether it really was hard work to these Kaffir women.

After all, the life of a Kaffir, especially if he be a chief, is a very free and independent one ; he has land in plenty, cattle, generally horses, and always wives, and weapons. He wants little more than what he possesses ; he is waited upon by his wives, and has unlimited power over them ; his children are of use to him, and if they be daughters, are really very profitable ; he can hunt or shoot to his heart's content ; can bask idly in the sun all day, drinking *itchuala* or smoking *dakka*, if such should be his inclinations. His crops are secure to yield him and his a plentiful supply of food at all times, and his rapidly increasing herds enable him to purchase with them any luxuries that he may wish for. When we compare the conditions which surround these people, and reflect upon the climate and fresh air in which they luxuriate, with those to which the inhabitants in some of our London alleys and courts have to submit, we undoubtedly decide that the heathen of Africa has certainly the better bargain of the two, with the exception that the resident in the foul air and

crowded regions of London or of other cities in England has the consolation of knowing that he lives in a highly civilized country.

One of the men at this kraal was a most confirmed smoker of a kind of hemp. This he managed with the aid of an ox's horn, and a small pipe fixed about the middle of it. The whole apparatus was his own manufacture, and he used it by placing his mouth over the upper part of the horn, and drawing the smoke through the pipe by this means.

On the second evening of my arrival, a young ox had been killed at a neighbouring kraal, and the natural result was a night of singing. These jovial nights were very queer affairs.

As many Kaffirs as could cram themselves into one hut did so, and watched intently the steaming earthen pots on the fire; a monotonous, loud-toned song being uttered by about a dozen of the men, who worked their arms up and down in a most energetic manner in time to the song. One or two individuals were provided with musical instruments, which were constructed and played as follows:—

A large bow was first formed, and to the wooden part of this a hollow gourd was fixed; from the string across to the bow a piece of string was fastened tightly; the fingers could, by pressing on this cross piece, either tighten or slacken the bow-string, and thus, when struck with a piece of stick, it would alter its tone from high to low, according to the taste of the musician. Half a dozen of these instruments formed a wild and fit accompaniment to the strange song of the remainder. The effects produced upon a portly gentleman by a Turkish bath are slight compared to those resulting to the Kaffirs from about two hours' "singing," when a feast is preparing.

It is really surprising, when we perceive how inflammable and dry are the materials of which a Kaffir's hut is composed, and also that the fire burns in the centre of this hut, in which there is no chimney, that the fabric does not immediately catch fire. Great caution is certainly necessary, for a spark even would soon set the place in a blaze, and there would probably be considerable difficulty in the inhabitants of a hut making their escape before they were severely burnt. Yet, with the exception of the usual accidents, resulting from young children crawling in amongst the hot embers, &c., I rarely heard of or saw cases where the Kaffirs had been sufferers from fire.

There are few greater contrasts than that which we may observe between a Kaffir, or any black man, when seen in our country and when visited in his own land. Judging from the miserable outcasts whom one sees occasionally in England, we are accustomed to associate in our minds a half-starved beggar and a black man as one and the same thing; and hence, if we judge without reflection, we might conclude that a nation of these people is nothing more than a vast concourse of the same type of individual.

There is, however, a most marked distinction between the general

its immediate neighbourhood, I came to the conclusion that there is much style of the Kaffirs who hang about our colonial towns or settlements, and those one meets some scores of miles from them.

The Kaffir is at home in his own wild country, and in his native dress; let him but don a portion of European costume, and he looks a vagabond. Amidst the dense bush, or in the kloofs of Africa, a Kaffir is a very learned man, for he is perfect master of his position, and feels confident therefrom. His very walk and manner seem different when he is at home to what they are when he is in a town, or working for a white man.

On almost every occasion of visiting a kraal, even though entirely unknown to the residents, I found the Kaffirs disposed not only to be friendly, but to be hospitable (I am referring now to those Kaffirs within the Natal district). Only once was my reception rather rough, and this instance occurred within a few miles of Natal Bay.

It happened that, having been hunting all day, I entered a small village in order to purchase some *amasi*, and hearing voices proceeding from the interior of a kraal, I dismounted, and hailed the inmates, who, upon hearing my voice, were at once silent. Seeing no reason for this, I removed the door which covered the entrance, and looked into the hut. There were two or three men and some old women sitting around the fire, but the most prominent figure was that of a dwarf, whose appearance was so hideous, that it nearly baffles description. To a body of about three feet in length were appended legs of about one foot, and arms which would have suited a man of six feet in height. His head was about twice the size of that of a full-grown man, whilst the broad forehead and deep-set eyes gave earnest of a mind with power for either good or evil. The expression of his face—which may truly be called the index of the mind—was villanous in the extreme, and the whole character of this individual was so like what we are told is that of our greatest enemy, that at first I almost doubted whether I had not thus suddenly intruded upon his majesty's privacy. My doubts were almost confirmed, when the monster fixed his eyes upon me, and abused me in the choicest Kaffir. He then half crawled, half pushed himself close to the doorway, and grinned at me like a baboon, making threatening gestures as though he purposed to hurl at me an assagay, which he held in his hand. This unexpected reception surprised me, for usually the Kaffirs were very glad to partake of a pinch of snuff, a plentiful supply of which I carried for their express gratification. So I slowly withdrew from the hut. As I retreated, the little wretch waddled out and showed his misshapen carcass, at the sight of which my old dog stuck his tail between his legs and fled. Some of the other men came out, and asked me to leave. They stated that the dwarf did not like white men, and was not well. I believe that I interrupted some incantation, and so raised this creature's ire. I reflected that if all Kaffir deformity was like this, their custom of destroying cripples was not a very mistaken one.

After repeated visits to various Zulu kraals in the Natal district and

to approve in the Kaffir character. They are undoubtedly brave men, honest to a rare degree, temperate even under temptation, and contented with their lot in life. When, however, their temper is raised, and they once commence war, they are bloodthirsty to a degree, men, women, and children being destroyed without mercy. As hunting companions, however, especially if we do not require from them too much self-sacrifice, they are admirable; and thus for following a spoor, stalking an old bull buffalo, or hunting out a wounded buck, the Zulu Kaffir almost realizes Cooper's ideals in the characters of Chingacgook and his son Le Cerf Agile. The Kaffirs are a very gentlemanly set of men, there being much in their manner that seems to indicate a species of training. Their questions, when you visit them, are not by any means impertinent. When visiting some white men in Africa, all kinds of curious questions are put to you, probably from curiosity, but they strike one as odd. For example, a traveller must not feel offended if he be asked by a man, at whose house he stops for an hour to rest, how old he is; whether he be married; if not, why not; how many brothers and sisters he has; whether he can swim, and so on; and the answers to each of these queries are discussed, and probably laughed at before your face by the family circle. When a Kaffir meets you, he usually addresses you with *Sarcar bonar Inkosi* (good morning; or, I see you well, chief). Then he will wait for you to speak to him, after which he probably will say, *Cielar pelar's indarbar* (tell me the news). This news may be rumours of wars, news of ships arriving, any intelligence connected with game in the vicinity, and so on. Perhaps he will then ask for a little snuff; but if you inform him that your stock of snuff is finished, he usually offers you his own gourd from which to take a pinch. It is quite a sight to see a Kaffir take his snuff. He sits down in a business-like manner, and as though he really meant to enjoy himself; takes the little stopper out of his snuff-gourd, and empties a quantity of snuff on to the upper part of his thumb. This will be the allowance for only one nostril. Heaving a deep sigh, he then takes a tremendous sniff at his thumb, and thus draws up half his allowance. The process is repeated for the other nostril, after which the tears usually course down his cheeks, as he placidly sits, the most enviable of Kaffirs.

Until I tried genuine Kaffir snuff, I was not aware of the intoxicating effects of tobacco taken in this shape. But that it is so I practically proved on one occasion, when in the bush; the effect, however, lasts only a few minutes, and is principally confined to a kind of giddiness.

Although occasionally given to bathe, I fear that the Kaffirs must be set down as rather a dirty race, a morning or evening wash being barely thought of; but we may hope that, as the Kaffirs progress, they may develop in this respect.

After about eight days' residence amongst the people of this kraal, I returned to Natal, having seen a beautiful country, and discerned many strange peculiarities besides those spoken of in this paper.

LOVE-SONGS OF HORACE AND CATULLUS.

WHILE the writings of Horace are in use at every English grammar school and university, and are consequently known to every advanced schoolboy, the "*Lepidum Novum Libellum*" of Catullus is familiar only to those who read poetry for pure purposes of pleasure. The odes and epodes of the former have been translated, dissected, commented upon by almost every English scholar; but there is no extant edition of Catullus with English notes. The reasons of this are obvious. Chief among them is the fact that Horace loses very little when bereft of his impure passages, while an expurgated Catullus would be a *caput mortuum*.

Yet the reader of Latin poetry can scarcely think of the gifted freed-man without remembering his patrician predecessor. Horace's boast that he was the first to enrich the Roman literature with translations from the Greek lyric poets,—

"Qui sibi fidit
Dux regit examen. Parios ego primus iambos
Ostendi Latio, numeros animosque secutus
Archilochi, non res et agentia verba Lycamben,"—

is nullified by the fact that he had been preceded by Catullus, whose works abound with Greek paraphrases, and who had translated *verbatim* the most delicious love-song of Sappho.* Moreover, the author of the "*Epithalamium*" was equal to original flights of a high description, which cannot be said of his elegant successor. Be that as it may, there is between these two poets a certain similarity, a certain bond of taste, which tempts one to regard them as Castor and Pollux in the poetical firmament. This similarity is perhaps most conspicuous in their love-songs—a species of composition in which both excelled, and which, by the sweetness of its cadence and the familiarity of its images, can never fail to afford delight to the parched literary Arab. For the tender passion is radically the same in all ages; and Romeo still goes musing under high heaven, albeit not in the *toga* of the Roman Manlius, or the theatrical tights of the Italian Montague.

In order to understand the Latin love-songs, it is necessary to know something of a state of society which has been rather amusingly described by Samuel Butler in one of his shorter satires, and when gallantry was carried to an extreme shocking in the eyes of modern communities. But to describe this state of society as it was, might be to trespass over the borders of polite decorum. Perhaps the hint we have given will be sufficient to those who know nothing of the subject. When we add that

* Capitally rendered into English by Ambrose Phillips, in the lines beginning,

"Blest as the immortal gods is he,
The youth who fondly sits by thee."

Lesbia, whom Catullus really and ardently loved, was a married woman, the insight will be clearer. As for Horace, we question very much whether he was not too much of an epicurean to be capable of a grand passion. His verses, at all events, are so elaborately finished as to warrant the assumption that the feelings they described were learned at second hand. In the extracts we shall give from the love-songs of both these poets, we shall furnish our own renderings, save in cases where we are familiar with some first-rate existing translation, and when we shall specify the source from which our translation is derived.

Personally speaking, Catullus possessed all those qualifications which are popularly supposed to belong to a successful lover. He was handsome, blessed with an excellent constitution, and nobly born. One can readily imagine him to have been a delightful, graceful companion; and, at any rate, we have it on good authority that he was fond of good wine and the company of the fair sex. He had scarcely assumed the *toga virilis*, when he plunged into all the dissipation of Rome. Polite company there, as in London during the reign of the second Charles, was the most debauched of all company; and gallantry was by no means the worst of the fashionable vices. Silo made money by catering for the pleasures of the dissolute aristocracy; and Catullus very speedily became one of his clients. His two villas—the one at Sirmio, and the other at Tibur—were doubtless the scenes of terrible excesses; and he speedily had to resort to usurers for the means of keeping up his splendid sins. Yet, amid all the dissolute influence of a dissolute age, in spite of the temptations which surrounded him and to which he yielded, he found time to foster a passion which seems to have been as genuine as it was undeserved, and which he has celebrated in poetry unrivalled for the naturalness of its transitions and the fine frenzy of its amorous appeals.

We are neither competent nor willing to enter into the vexed controversy relative to the identity of Lesbia. The most general belief, however, appears to be that she was Clodia, sister of the Clodius killed by Milo, and addressed by her bitterest enemy, Cicero, as *amica omnium*. Whoever she was, she was certainly one of the most dissolute women of the time; but the extraordinary adoration with which she was regarded by Catullus must either have been exaggerated or have arisen from a voluntary blindness to her infidelities. Faithless alike to her husband and to her gallant, her iniquities gradually forced themselves on the attention of the latter. By slow degrees his eyes became opened to the fact that he had been idolizing a worthless woman; yet, even when he is fully conscious of that fact, he clings to her image with a passionate tenderness which is at once undignified and pathetic. He weeps, he upbraids, he implores; and throughout he chronicles the history of his infatuation in lyrics with the music of the waterfall, and epigrams with the swiftness of the sunflash. To understand this infatuation at all, we must forget that we live in the nineteenth century. Among the contemporaries of Catullus, it would

seem that women were not expected to be faithful to the men they married. It was elegant to choose one gallant, but a lady became odious when she tolerated half a dozen.

The very first poem in the collection, if we except the Dedication to Cornelius Nepos, introduces Lesbia to the reader. It is the famous, and deservedly famous, address to the sparrow—*pulcer delicia mea puella*. Here we find the lover in his tenderest yet happiest vein. All is *couleur de rose*; he loves, and he is beloved. With rapturous eyes he watches the fair divinity as she toys with her feathered pet, and when it flies into her bosom he cannot help envying its happiness. The sins of Lesbia are yet unknown; she is pure, perfect, beautiful,—a delicious little girl, who delights her blooming innocence by sporting merrily with a tame bird. Immediately afterwards follows the immortal lament on the sparrow's death, one of the most exquisite *morceaux* in any language, and the following lines of which have always seemed to us in the highest vein of fancy:—

“Circumsiliens modo huc, modo illuc,
Ad solum dominam usque pipilabat.
Qui nunc per iter tenebriosum,
Illuc, unde negant redire quomquam!”

The sparrow does not fold up its wings, and lie down to die; it waves its little wings, leaps from Lesbia's bosom, and goes flying away along the shades. The eyes of the lovers watch it as it wings away and becomes a mere speck in the distance; and they turn to one another, crying, *O factum male*, and Lesbia's eyes are red with weeping. Centuries have passed since the lines were written, but the sparrow is still sailing on among the shades of Orcus; it is a speck above us, and it will fly on eternally to some bourne that it is destined never to reach. We watch its flight with much the same feeling as filled the heart of Catullus. This is a very poetical view of the lines; but the poetical interpretation of such delicate suggestions is the only true one. It is in soft touches like this that Catullus abounds—touches not easily perceived by minds that have nothing to confer; and that liberal applications lie in art as well as nature, we uphold on no less an authority than Mr. Tennyson. Elegance of diction, which is generally consequent on delicacy of meaning, is the main peculiarity of the love-songs of Catullus. We are never told too much; but we are ever held in chain by the true Roman art of scholarly reticence.

But here we have our lover on the very pinnacle of amorous happiness:—

“We live, my Lesbia, and we love;
Though hoary heads may shake reproving,
A farthing for them! Let them rail;
What were our life without our loving?
Days may break, and days may die—
Time will fly!
Days will die, and days will break, dear;
But you and I,
When once we sleep, will never wake, dear!”

"Therefore, my dear, we'll live and love—
 All hoary wrath is harsh and vain, dear.
 Kiss me, sweet, a thousand times,
 Then a thousand times again, dear !
 Hundreds, thousands, kisses, kisses—
 Such as this is !
 Then confuse the sum we count, dear—
 Revel in blisses,
 That none may envy the amount, dear !"—*Carm. V.*

Again, when Lesbia desires to know the precise number of kisses which would satisfy her admirer, he passionately replies,—

"Many as the stars that brightly
 Look on clasping lovers nightly !
 So to kiss you o'er and o'er, dear,
 Is enough for him and more, dear,
 Who so madly doth adore, dear !"—*Carm. VII., 7–10.*

The rapture of the lover, however, is seldom of long duration. Shortly after the above fine frenzy we find our poet in the dumps. There has been a quarrel, it seems. Lesbia snubs her admirer, who retaliates. He will be a man, he will be obdurate, he will seek no more favours, he will fly from the greedy altar that yet smokes with his last sacrifice, he has been miserable too long. He holds to this determination for a time; he delights himself in other amours; but one can tell that he is not quite cured, by the bitterness of his satire on several occasions. He addresses a poem to Hypsithilla; but the tone is not genuine, it lacks spontaneity. Presently the master passion conquers him; by this time, too, he has probably made it up with his mistress. Somebody has been drawing a comparison between Lesbia and the sweetheart of Formianus, and Catullus is contemptuously indignant :—

"Hail, girl with very little nose,
 No well-turn'd foot, no jet-black eyes,
 No tapering fingers,* mouth of rose,
 No tongue to please us and surprise !
 The province tells thee thou art fair,
 O girl whom Formian keeps in cage !
 Thee with my Lesbia they compare !
 O silly, stupid, senseless age !"—*Carm. XLIII.*

The next poem in the collection which is specially addressed to Lesbia is the translation of Sappho's exquisitely beautiful ode. The last lines of the translation are sadly inferior to the original.

It is impossible to affix dates to many of these poems; but it is quite certain that they are not printed in the order in which they were written. In following the writer's amour with Lesbia, therefore, we must jump forward to poem eighty-third, where we find some amusing badinage relative

to Lesbia's husband. A little further on is a poem written certainly long after fruition, and which is delightful for its brevity and point :—

“Lesbia constantly abuses me,
Upbraids me, mocks me, and accuses me,
Reviles me, snubs me, and reproves me—
May I perish, but she loves me !

“For just as often I abuse her,
Upbraid her, mock her, and accuse her,
Reville her, snub her, and reprove her—
Yet may I perish, but I love her !”

The eighty-sixth song, however, draws a pretty comparison between Quintia and Lesbia :—

“The many swear that Quintia's fair—
She's straight and tall, I will confess ;
In detail, few with her compare ;
But, in the aggregate, her air
Lacks sweetness, grace, and prettiness.

“No ! Lesbia, Lesbia for me ;
In her all beauties meet combined !
Faultless in every detail, she
Mingles in sweet entirety
The stolen charms of all her kind !”—

a poem which has been very nicely imitated by Moore, in the “Irish Melodies.”

Time enlightens the most credulous of lovers. Slowly, but surely, it forces itself upon Catullus that he has been wasting his best years on an unworthy strumpet. Very pathetic are his appeals ; very touching is the fervour with which he clings to an image once esteemed divine. Thus tenderly does he exclaim :—

“Ah ! never was a woman so beloved
As thou art loved by me, dear ;
Ah ! never was a woman so beloved,
And ne'er was lover's faith so truly proved
As mine was proved to thee, dear !

“By thy unfaith I'm brought to such distress,
So does my heart implore thee,
That I should love thee less if free from guilt ;
That, sin thine utmost, do what'er thou wilt,
I cannot but adore thee !”

And all this tenderness was wasted upon a woman who, if we identify her with Claudia, was very appropriately named by Cicero *Quadrantaria*. Truly, the blind god makes man bend at extraordinary shrines. We cannot suppose for a moment that the agony of Catullus was purely poetical ; every line of his fragments tends to abolish such an assumption. Never were lines fraught with deeper pathos than we find here :—

"Cæli, Lesbia nostra, Lesbia illa,
 Illa Lesbia, quam Catullus unam
 Plus quam se, atque suos amavit omnes!"—

where the very music itself seems to wail monotonously. Utterances such as this became absolutely painful in their intensity. Even when he feels convinced that his idol is a mere strumpet, he cannot resign her. He despises her, he cries, but, alas! he cannot help loving her.

"Et si impensius uxor,
 Multo mihi tamen es vilior et levior!"

At last, Catullus can no longer disguise from himself the fact that Lesbia is unworthy. Such a love as his, however, must have endured till death, however disguised by the elegant *abandon* of the fine gentleman; and Lesbia, wretch as she was, and whoever she was, abides for ever among the immortal heroines of classic song. Indeed, the reader appears to catch the poet's complaint; he somehow finds it impossible to think very harshly of such a pretty little creature, and one so dearly beloved by such a sweet singer. The last passionate cry of Catullus, beginning, "*Si qua recordanti benefacta priora voluptas*," rings in the ear with a deep music of solemn agony. We translate it into blank verse, with a slender hope of doing some justice to its beauty:—

"If there be comfort in the memory
 Of past good deeds,—if to have acted well,
 Nor broken holy promise, nor profaned
 The name of the immortal gods to lure
 The ears of men, be comfort,—then for thee,
 Catullus, out of this thy bitter love
 Shall spring a well of calmer, sadder joy.
 For thou hast gentle been in word and deed,
 Ay, gentle, gentle beyond gentleness,
 Though thou hast spent thy choicest years in vain
 On one unworthy. So lament no more!
 But boldly tear from out thy breast the poor
 Illusion throbbing there, in spite of pride;
 Vex not the gods by loving baseness still!
 Though bitter be the struggle—for 'tis hard
 To quite forget a love so cherished—
 Yet conquer, conquer, for thy soul's sake. This
 Victory thou must achieve, or perish quite.

"O gods, great gods, if ever ye have help'd
 Weak man to cast his blackest sorrow off,—
 If pity be your heavenly attribute,—
 Strengthen me; look with mercy on my woe!
 If ever I have served ye virtuously,
 Pluck from my bosom this infestuous plague
 Polluting every fibre, from my soul
 Affrighting joy! 'Tis little that I ask:

Tis not her love I wish, nor do I beg
 A look ye cannot give—to make her pure.
 Tis but oblivion of her face I crave !
 I would be heal'd of my disease accursed !
 And, for the sake of pious service done,
 Refuse me not, but heal me, gentle gods !"—*Carm. LXXVI.*

Few readers will question the beauty of this appeal ; it possesses all the simplicity of perfect truth. The agony of the writer is too deep to admit of elaborate conceits or farfetched images. It is this simplicity, or naturalness, which places Catullus so far above all other Roman writers of love-songs, and particularly distinguishes him from Horace. He seldom strains after an effect in any of his writings ; in his poems about Lesbia, never. They are as wholesomely real as flesh and blood ; they are as elegantly simple as the lyrics of Burns. Their very impurities were the natural language of the time, and sprang from no love of filth for its own sake. Catullus never revels in the dirt of the pigsty, as Juvenal seems to do. He was far too delicately cultured to admire mud, though he was obliged to fling it sometimes ; and he was much too sincere a lover to be a voluntary voluptuary. His defence of his coarser passages is, perhaps, questionable :—

" Nam castum esse decet pium poetam
 Ipsum : versiculos nihil necesse est."—*Carm. XVI., 5, 6.*

But the plea has been a common one from time immemorial, and was paraphrased by our own Herrick, for instance (whose obligations to Catullus and Horace are very numerous), in the last two lines of the "Hesperides :"—

"To this book's end, this last line he'd have placed,—
 Jocund his Muse was, but his life was chaste."

If we are of a mind to treat such transgressions of propriety with super-excessive rigour, we had better commit the entire *delicia poetarum Latinorum*, complete or fragmentary, into one great bonfire ; for the mud is so mixed up with the gold, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other in any but a crucible in which both would evaporate.

Comparisons are odious sometimes, but a comparison between Catullus and Horace naturally suggests itself. There can be no doubt whatever that Catullus was the more original genius, and that Horace was the more finished artist. Catullus is nearly always vehement ; Horace is invariably cool. The one is an easy epicurean ;* the other would be an epicurean if he could, but he is too tender-hearted. Yet these poets are alike remarkable for elegance of poetical diction. In the case of Catullus, the elegance springs from the simple fervour of the thought ; in the case of Horace, it is the result of elaborate art. Both poets are delightful, but Catullus

* That is to say, an epicurean according to that wilful misinterpretation of Epicurus prevalent among the Romans.

flops down on his knees, beseeches, implores, in the fine frenzy of his passion; while Horace, when he does complain, does so in quite a dignified way, and pastes together pretty *morceaux* of Sappho and Alcæus, with a view to making the complaint as elegant as possible.

But it will never do to go on asking ourselves if Horace was an original poet. We must adopt no half-measures of criticism with a man whose works have, perhaps, afforded more pleasure, and been resorted to with more delight, than all the other Latin books put together. Let us take him for what he is, without grumbling. Never was there a more perfect artist than Horace, and never were readers less conscious of the presence of a laborious artist, than the readers of Horace. All is delightfully simple; the parts harmonize beautifully. It is only when we begin to pick the lines to pieces that the skill with which the work has been done awakens our astonishment.

Mr. Maclean, in the preface to his excellent edition of Horace ("Bibliotheca Classica," vol. ii.), observes of the poet's amatory verses:—"With rare exceptions, his compositions of this class, however elegant they may be, appear frigid and passionless, bearing the stamp of imitation, with unequivocal signs of art, and none of nature. The crowd of mistresses that have been gathered for him out of his poems is beyond belief; and the laborious folly that has tried to classify his amours, and to follow chronologically the shifting of his affections, I have had occasion to notice. It proceeds upon an interpretation of the odes which is foreign to their true character. Horace was neither more nor less licentious, probably, than most of his contemporaries, though his biographer charges him with gross sensuality; but however this may be, that the women of his odes are in nearly every instance fictitious I have no doubt whatever."

This is the best point of view to take, not only because it is the most logically probable, but because it is the fairest to Horace. The whole tone of his love poems is that of an easy looker on, a philosophic sympathizer with the amours of wealthy friends. Now and then he makes love himself; but though he flows nectar (as in the "Ode to Pyrrha," which Scaliger calls "*all nectar*"), he evinces very little of the milk of human passion.

Personally speaking, Horace was a decided contrast to the handsome Catullus. He was not a healthy man: he had a liver; he had weak eyes; he was prematurely gray. He was short and fat—*epicuri de grege porcum*, as he humorously calls himself in the epistle to Albius Tibullus. He was not over-valiant, as we learn from his exploit at Actium. Altogether, he does not seem to have been the sort of person likely to succeed with the fair sex; nor do we believe that he was the sort of person to break his heart for any woman. He was fonder of good living than the airy food of the lover; he loved a brimming cup of old Massia fully as well as the sweetest kiss of Lydia's lips.

Let us not fail, however, to do justice to the grace and beauty of some

of his love poems. One of the sweetest, perhaps, is the little song addressed to Chloe, and thus admirably translated by Mr. Conington :—

“ You fly me, Chloe, as o’er trackless hills
 A young fawn runs her timorous dam to find,
 Whom empty terror thrills
 Of woods and whispering wind.
 Whether ’tis spring’s first shiver, faintly heard
 Through the light leaves, or lizard in the brake,
 The rustling thorns have stirr’d,
 Her heart, her knees, they quake.
 Yet I, who chase you, no grim lion am,
 No tiger fell to crush you in my gripe ;
 Come, learn to leave your dam
 For lover’s kisses ripe !” *—*Carm. XXIII., Lib. i.*

The expression “ spring’s first shiver ” capitably conveys the force of the original ; but it is a pity that Mr. Conington sacrifices *virides*, green, in its connection with *lacerta*, lizards. The tenth line is an improvement on the ninth line of the Latin, where *tigris* is made feminine by *aspera*, a very obvious shift to complete the measure. Mr. Conington judiciously reads “ tiger ” instead of “ tigress,” and thereby corrects Horace in one of the many passages which betoken laziness.

A word here on this new attempt, as Mr. Conington himself calls it, to “ translate the untranslatable.” Of the author’s qualities as a scholar there can be no question ; his edition of Virgil alone, so far as it has gone (“ Bibliotheca Classica ”), would place him very high in the ranks of learned commentators. Of his qualities as a translator we had favourable evidence years ago. He has, however, surpassed himself in the present undertaking. His translation of the odes seems to us very much the best extant, not even excepting the more flowery one of Mr. Theodore Martin. It is very faithful to the original, in general force as well as in point of detail, and it is exceedingly readable. We are struck, however, by the fact that familiar lines of English poetry frequently run into Mr. Conington’s head, and force themselves into his translations. We will give three instances. In the first ode, the line “ Who breaks the too, too solid day unblamed ” (“ *Nec partem solido demere de die spernit*”) bears a close resemblance to Shakspeare’s “ O that this too, too solid flesh would melt !” Here, however, the resemblance is intentional. “ The rain, it rains not every day, on the soaked meads ”—Mr. Conington’s rendering of “ *Non semper imbres nubibus hispidos manant in agro* ” (Carm. IX., Lib. ii.)—reminds one forcibly, up to the word “ day,” of the burthen of an old familiar song. And in the twenty-sixth ode of Book Third, the line “ For ladies’ love I late was fit ” is

* “ The Odes and Carmen Seculare of Horace,” translated into English verse by John Conington, M.A., Corpus Professor of Latin in the University of Oxford. Bell and Dalry, 1863.

singularly like the line of Dryden, "Old as I am, for ladies' love unfit."
It is, moreover, a rather weak reproduction of the original,—

"Vixi puellis nuper idoneus
Et militavi non sine gloria!"

As this poem, though in a very different strain, is addressed to the same
Chloe alluded to above, we subjoin it:—

"For ladies' love I late was fit,
And good success my warfare bless'd;
But now my arms, my lyre I quit,
And hang them up to rust or rest.
Here, where arising from the sea
Stands Venus, lay the load at last,
Links, crowbars, and artillery,
For threatening doors that dared be fast.
O goddess! Cyprus owns thy sway,
And Memphis, far from Thracian snow:
Raise high thy lash, and deal, I pray,
That haughty Chloe but one blow!"

R. W. B.

MADELEINE GRAHAM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEPRIARS," ETC.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CLIMAX.

ABOUT the second day of Mr. Behringbright's benevolent watchfulness by the sick bed of Camille Le Tellier, when favourable symptoms had begun to manifest themselves in the patient, and all the worst was known as to the occasion of his disorder, Lord Glengariff presented himself, as was also usual with him, three or four times a day, in the apartment of the sufferer.

The young Earl's kindness and sympathy in his great misfortune had been Mr. Behringbright's almost only consolation and support. Not ignorant of heart-woes, he had learned to comfort them; and, indeed, the young man had suggested a very natural reason for rejoicing rather than grieving over the calamity that had occurred, since it had happened in time to prevent the betrayed lover of Madeleine Graham from falling completely into the deepest pitfall ever laid for his unlucky steps in love affairs. That was surely an advantage Mr. Behringbright could not refuse to acknowledge, and it had not a little comforted and strengthened him in his misfortune; but the perusal of Madeleine's letters to her Camille, so different in style from those she addressed to her husband elect,—it was that most materially contributed to his disenchantment.

Mr. Behringbright's own mind was now, in fact, at sufficient freedom to notice the deepened shade of melancholy that overspread the young Earl's visage; and yet he seemed to bring good news. He had received a telegram from his mother announcing that she had arrived just in time to find Emily still in Belfast, but on the very point of quitting that city and the house of Sir Orange Graham together, in consequence of a strangely peremptory dismissal on the part of the mistress of it, who had ordered her off at an hour's notice, without any imaginable reason that she could discover. And this, although only a couple of days remained until she was to leave for England, by her own wish and stipulation, after Olympe Lorient's revelation of the scandals concerning her, started by Madeleine Graham, in relation to Camille Le Tellier.

Slight scandals these, however, compared with those it then became Lady Glengariff's painful duty to reveal to Emily Maughan! Scandals the Countess now declared which every visible circumstance and probability, every imaginable sign and proof of innocence on the part of the slandered girl, overwhelmed with refutation. Nay, that Lady Graham herself declared, even when she was given to understand who had made the

injurious statement, were so utterly false and unfounded, that she thought her daughter must have been beside herself to make the charge. But to complete the refutation, on hearing with what she was traduced, far from showing reluctance to face her accuser, Emily Maughan had insisted at once on proceeding to Killarney, and, face to face with her there, refuting the infamous and wholly unfounded charges that had been brought against her. The Countess intimated she had willingly acceded to the proposal, and the telegram concluded by stating that their arrival might be expected that same evening, at the utmost speed of express train and post.

Somewhat to Mr. Behringbright's surprise, Lord Glengariff announced this intelligence without any sign of the satisfaction the former thought he would have experienced in thus obtaining what had been his anxious desire. His manner was, indeed, sombre and preoccupied, and what he said after he had made the statement, alarmed Mr. Behringbright with the notion that, in spite of all he had heard and witnessed to disprove Madeleine Graham's varied calumnies, he seemed still haunted with the notion that *his* conduct towards her admitted of a doubtful interpretation.

"I have to ask of you a great favour, dear Mr. Behringbright," the young Earl said; "it is that you will allow me to persevere in my original plan—deception, if you like to call it so,—and that Emily Maughan may suppose she is replying to the questions I would still address to her, as to a man upon his possible death-bed, who can make no use that might be displeasing to her of the fullest admission of the facts of the case. My mother and Emily are of course entirely ignorant of the turn events have taken; of the disclosures that have been made. They will arrive at Glengariff, and remain so for a short time. I shall return to my couch, and expect your co-operation in enabling me to ascertain the real state of Emily's feelings towards me; *all* we have heard may be calumny and delusion, for my mother adds to her telegram, that even her letter inviting Emily's return has been tampered with most insidiously."

Mr. Behringbright coloured again, as he had on two former remarkable occasions when this delicate subject had been in debate; and feeling that he did so, rendered him still more unwilling to seem unwilling. He endeavoured to express hesitation on another score than the real one.

"Why would you prolong your mother's anxiety, and expose Emily to an afflicting scene? It is impossible, after all we have known and ascertained, that a breath of suspicion can linger on Emily's name or conduct," he said, deprecatingly.

"My mother is aware that my worst ailment was the fever of suspicion and doubt that preyed upon me regarding Miss Maughan; or deem you she would have left me to die alone?" replied Lord Glengariff, sadly enough, and with a formality and unusualness in styling *Emily Miss Maughan* that struck his interlocutor. "But as regards Emily's conduct, I never really believed in a single word that was uttered against her. I tried, but I could not. If she had simply stated to me, with that holy

woman-look of hers, that it was all false, and would have married me, I would have married her with a perfect assurance that I had given my honour into the keeping of the truest and purest of women. The point I would ascertain related not to these matters; but as the whole chance of my righting myself in existence lies in being satisfied of the utter hopelessness, or possibilities for hope, of my affection towards Emily, give me this only chance in the way I desire."

Thus pressed, Mr. Behringbright, though he felt all the embarrassment of the position, both for Emily and himself, finally acquiesced in the plan. Perhaps he had some vague under-yearning of curiosity to ascertain whether the notion, which he had still never clearly suffered himself to analyze in his own most secret thoughts, was well founded. Perhaps it gave him a kind of secret bitter enjoyment to consider that he was about to witness one more proof of the heartlessness and instability of female nature. Emily would take to her noble suitor, no doubt, when once she could really be brought to believe he was in earnest in his proffers, and that all other obstacles were removed, saving such a foolish barrier as a preference for another. Yet, again, could it be possible that she preferred another?—such another as she whom a detestable, assassin-souled coquette had, for his money—and for his money only——But there Mr. Behringbright halted in his reflections, and blushed at his own conceit to fancy that in reality Emily Maughan could ever have given him reason for the suspicion. She never had, he would have it to himself now. She had got into a habit of blushing and looking foolish when she spoke to him before he procured her the Glengariff situation in Ireland, no doubt. But what of that? He dared say, now he recollected, he looked silly enough himself on those occasions. And if he had been the object of a simple, childish liking in those days, by so much the more would Emily's certain acceptance of Lord Glengariff's renewed offers go to prove the inherent fickleness and subjection to worldly and mercenary impulses of the modern female heart.

So reasoned Mr. Behringbright. Whether he reasoned well or not speedily came on to the proof. But I think people who have attained conviction on any point are seldom so shaky and irresolute when it is put to the strain as was this gentleman when he was summoned by Lord Glengariff to fulfil his part in testing the theory, beside his couch of supposed grievous and dangerous hurt, in Glengariff Castle. Word was brought that the Countess and Miss Maughan were expected by the next train, which was nigh due; and to avoid the shadow of any private or aside interference with the device, Mr. Behringbright felt bound to leave his other strangely constituted patient, and cross to the Castle.

He found Lord Glengariff stretched in bed, in a darkened room, with all the appearance of an invalid, though he was dressed under his night-gown, and with a face so pallid and agitated, that it had needed little aid of art to give the notion of a person dangerously excited, and exhausted

too. But that it had received with the help of powder and some lines of blue chalk, and his lordship had even added the somewhat unnecessary and ghastly adornment of a few splashes of red ochre over the breast front, where he had, in reality, been rather fiercely gored by the dying stag. The illusion was completed by an array of surgical straps and bandages and medicine bottles, and the presence of Dr. Bucktrout, who had also been required to attend, and, in his niece's interests possibly, did as he was requested in everything, very humbly and submissively. Nothing more was required to complete the *mise en scène* when Mr. Behringbright was seated by the bedside as commiserating friend, looking and feeling also extremely alarmed and uncomfortable. Money is a valuable commodity; but I believe the millionaire would not have begrudged several thousand pounds to have been released from the uncomfortable necessity of this climax to the discomforts of his visit to Glengariff Castle.

Luckily, the Killarney train was particularly punctual that day, and within a few minutes of the hour they were expected, the Countess and her charge drove up to the gates of the Castle. Neither did they make any unnecessary delay when once they had arrived. Lord Glengariff had hardly time to start up in his bed and sink back again on the pillows—Mr. Behringbright to shuffle half a dozen times on his chair—ere the bed-chamber door opened, and Mr. Molloy—himself in *costume de voyage*—entered to announce, “My lady and Miss Maughan, my lord and your honour!” and the two fellow-travellers appeared, in the dress they had worn on the journey, arm in arm. Or rather, Lady Glengariff—who was greatly agitated—supported herself on her young companion; who, on the contrary, came with a firm, resolved, perfectly self-possessed step. Emily looked pale, nevertheless—so pale, as to be absolutely colourless in her quiet brown straw bonnet and black stuff burnous. You would have said, Charlotte Corday going to execution—she looked so young, so fair, so marbled into a fixity of resolution by a deep-seated, internal conviction of the rightfulness of what she had done, or was to do—so equal to what extremes of suffering and calamity might yet be in the power of fate to inflict.

Lord Glengariff read his doom in Emily's first glance,—a glance full of compassion, earnest sympathy, affectionate inquiry: but not all the sum of these is love! Mr. Behringbright could not but look at her with a kind of wonder in the fascination that drew his eyes towards her. Emily scarcely seemed to him the same person; so transfigured was the once soft, yielding, timorously shrinking and sensitive girl, by the high thoughts and determination that had changed her in a few weeks into an heroically determined though half heart-broken woman!

I believe she saw him before she saw Lord Glengariff, though her glance seemed first to fall upon the latter. A kind of shock and quiver passed over her face; then all was calm and resolute as before.

It should be remembered that at this time Emily was entirely ignorant

of the discovery that had re-established her own purity and innocence in the fullest light, and had revealed the perfidy and vileness in all other respects of Madeleine Graham. It was destined to form the subject of many future hinted revelations of the public press, but had not yet passed local bounds. She had reason to consider herself as presented at a tribunal for judgment, already convinced of her guilt. Her first words expressed this belief, when Lord Glengariff, having faintly received his mother's fond caress, requested that he might be raised in his bed, and that Miss Maughan would shake hands with him, to show she bore him no ill-will for having brought her from such a distance to so uncomfortable a scene. "Though," he added, purposely, "I am greatly better to-day—have been better ever since my mother complied with my earnest wishes in requesting your presence, Miss Maughan; and Dr. Bucktrout is now quite assured I shall recover to all my former health and strength."

"Quite certain," echoed Dr. Bucktrout.

"I am exceedingly glad to hear so, Lord Glengariff," said Emily, very gently, but with no tremble of emotion in her tones—some greater feeling had swallowed up all the rest; "but until you are satisfied that the atrocious calumnies against me are such, pardon me if I refuse on my own part to subject you to what you, or any other honourable man, ought to deem a degradation."

Mr. Behringbright thereupon—to his own surprise—took up the proper utterance. They had exchanged no other greeting as yet but that silent shock of feeling. "There is no occasion, Miss Maughan," he said, "to enter into miserable explanations of the kind. The person associated with you in the detestable misrepresentation—Camille Le Tellier himself—has completely exonerated you of the remotest touch of suspicion, and confessed that he had no authority whatever for his presumptuous proposals and bargainings respecting you."

Emily looked a little surprised, but also deeply gratified. "I am spared, then," she murmured, with that intensest sign of emotion, a *white flush*, overspreading her fair countenance, "the necessity of a most painful and degrading denial of the whole infamous imputation. To no one who could have required more of me would I ever have opened my lips in refutation."

"And this is the girl," thought Mr. Behringbright, "whom I have found so tearful and timorous in—in other things!"

"Mr. Behringbright has spoken the exact facts of the case. You shall hear the particulars at more length afterwards.—You, mother, also," resumed Lord Glengariff, anxiously cutting the former short in a kind of apology he began to utter, "let me proceed now, while I have strength to inquire, with some questions I must ask and have answered, still dearest Emily Maughan! or die of weariness and suspense. And first of all—answer me truly, on your living soul, to this! (heed not the presence of him of whom I make the demand, or of any man, for I constitute

myself your champion to the death, and you hear that I shall soon be in a condition to 'brook mine armour' in the cause, as they say in the romances)—has Mr. Behringbright himself behaved to you always as a true and honourable man, or has he, at some period, made promises to you which he has not fulfilled?"

"Lord Glengariff—" began the personage so spoken of, vehemently, but his lordship interrupted him,—

"Peace! peace! Have you not promised me I should know the truth from her own lips?—and from them alone will I accept an oracle!" And he turned to Emily with an implicitness in the noble youthful candour of his looks that more than the words declared he expected one.

And such he received in reply, and probably in more senses than upon the question he propounded.

"Mr. Behringbright never made me any promise whatever, of any sort," said Emily, in a low, but perfectly distinct, and—so to speak—adamant-convictioned tone, "because his goodness always anticipated any possible demand I could have made upon it; and if he has ever not behaved to me and mine as an 'honourable man,' it was when he became an angel of beneficence and generosity."

Lord Glengariff gave a deep sigh, and closed his eyes for a moment; while his mother, who had moved round to his side, gently pressed his forehead with her hand—her favourite soothing action to herself. And though it was an action that often made him impatient, it seemed to comfort him now.

"Thanks, dear mother," he said. "No man has lost everything who has so kind and loving a mother left! But I *must* proceed! Tell me then, dear Emily, do you really love another—prefer another—to all I have offered you—all I still could offer? Myself—my title—my possessions—my never-failing love?"

Emily only faltered for an instant; and then replied, while a burning blush suffused the countenance so pale but a moment before, "I do—I must ever, Lord Glengariff! I grieve to be forced to say it, but from the first instant that my heart opened at all to impressions of the kind, I have preferred another, not only to you, but to all mankind—to my own self infinitely! and so must continue to the latest hour of my existence. But be comforted," she continued, with a grateful emotion, and anxiety to allay the pain she inflicted, hurrying her on in her expressions much beyond her intentions. "It is also the truth, as I informed you, that the person who is the unalterable object of the master feeling of my existence, does not return my affection,—is even ignorant of it,—is betrothed to another! And though that other is the wickedest of women, I have no means of proving her so, and he adores her; and henceforth I am silent for ever on the subject."

There was a brief silence after this overflow, and when the Earl of Glengariff spoke again, it was in accents as weak and tremulous as a

child's, but instinct with the heroic generosity and fortitude of the manliest resolve.

"You hear, Mr. Behringbright! Happiest of men, were you but aware of your happiness! The vile obstacle that existed between you is removed by her own atrocity of ill-doing to obtain all that which Emily Maughan despises and casts to the wind for *your* sake! Yes, for *your* sake! It is in vain to stand any longer on a weak puntilio. Emily herself will not disavow that it is you whom she prefers to all mankind—to youth—to rank—to a yet more distinguished social position than your own! Heaven bestows on your good and charitable and affectionate nature this priceless consolation and recompense! Take it—and at last ungrudgingly—from my hand."

And Lord Glengariff, with a gesture that Emily could not anticipate or attempt to withdraw from in time, took her hand, pressed it for a moment to his lips, and placed it in that of Mr. Behringbright. And the latter received it, not coldly and lifelessly resigned, but clutching it to his heart in a passion of tenderness and gratitude, to which words could do no justice; but which he endeavoured to express as follows:—

"You have restored my belief in the angelic purity and superiority to every mercenary feeling in your sex, dearest Emily. And it is to you alone I can look henceforth for consolation after the baseness and treachery of Madeleine Graham, who had as nigh made me her victim as she had made you. I have discarded her for ever from my heart and presence, and there is no one left in the world whom I would make my wife but you, if your hand can follow where you confess your heart has been devoted so long!"

"You speak to me dreams—enigmas. I am surely asleep, and imagine all this! But were it possible to be—could all be true—do not imagine, Mr. Behringbright, that I would accept—on a momentary impulse of anger or disappointment—what your calm reflections—Mistake me not so far! I do not appear here as the accuser of Madeleine Graham, but as my own defender from a gross imputation. But her charge against me may have been merely the result of a personal pique against me—not of her own criminality. I am aware of nothing but a pardonable imprudence in her relations with Monsieur Camille Le Tellier, and—"

"Pardonable imprudence," exclaimed Lord Glengariff, "when she dared to accuse you of the dishonour she had herself incurred with him—when she directed her paramour to pour his vile effusions to her in your name, to secure herself, at any sacrifice of you, from the danger of detection!"

"When she must have opened my letter inviting your return, and inserted a forged postscript forbidding it. By what devil's art I know not! but certain I am I never penned it," exclaimed Lady Glengariff.

"My niece writes several hands," said Dr. Buoktrout, unable to resist

the natural impulse of a man who had all his life run with the hounds, to have a share in at the death now; "and you remember, Mr. Behringbright, the letter *that* American presented to you, when he affected so curiously to stand up for my poor girl's innocence!"

"I do; it is here," said Mr. Behringbright, producing one from his pocket, and flinging it on the bed. Lady Glengariff snatched it up, and exclaimed, with almost a wild laugh, "Good heavens! my very handwriting. So identical, that I could scarcely refuse to believe I had written it, but for the contents."

"And all these 'pardonable imprudences,' dear, generous child, have been crowned by an attempt to murder the man she really infinitely preferred to me all along," concluded Mr. Behringbright.

"Powers divine! what can be sufficient punishment for such atrocity?" exclaimed the Countess.

"I have determined on the punishment. It will be the greatest mortal justice can inflict," said Mr. Behringbright.

CHAPTER XLVII.

ANTI-CLIMAX AND CONCLUSION.

It was as the agents of this decreed retribution that Lord Glengariff and Dr. Bucktrout, after some subsequent interval, invited Miss Graham's accompaniment to the "Red Herring" tavern; a solicitation which, being backed by such cogent arguments as to the hopelessness and peril of any species of resistance amply placed at the ambassadors' disposal, that young lady did not think proper to refuse compliance withal.

She was still dressed as becomingly and coquettishly as ever; her gloves were drawn on as carefully that not a wrinkle should be seen in the leather; the riband bows of her bonnet were as faultlessly opened out. She looked a little paler and thinner certainly for a fortnight's sleeplessness and constant parading in public places, where everybody seemed unaccountably to shun her. Paler in spite of—or perhaps the more in consequence of—the contrast of the liberal rouging with which she had deemed it advisable to attempt disguising the natural operation of the despondent passions on the human organization. But the French—whose apt pupil Madeleine was in other matters—rouge even their corpses; they like so much to see everything *comme il faut*. On the whole, I pronounce she looked very well: hardy, blooming, undaunted. The colour of her gloves was light *blue*; not as I have seen it stated, where they ought to have known better, *rose d'amour* pink.

Camille was reclining, with no mistake whatever about *his* paleness, in an arm-chair, arrayed in a handsome yellow Chinese morning gown, and looking almost as shrivelled, white, and bald, as an almond in course of peeling for dessert, just out of the hot water. His eyes were sunk h₂

into his skull, and surrounded by purple aureolas, like those of a ghost, according to the most authentic reports—not absurd, scientific, colourless realizations. There really was no occasion for Madeleine's civility, who, the moment she entered the apartment, went up to him, and kindly inquired how he was—extending her neat Parisian glove on the right hand, at the same moment. He looked so very ill!—And so he seemed to think, for he said—allowing her to take his hand, probably on a pre-arranged programme of the entertainments,—“Regard me!—Alas! I may say now indeed with the great Malbrook, after so much glory and vanity of success, ‘*This was a man!*’”

“Oh, you will be sure and get quite well again soon, dear Camille! Your hair will grow again—there are plenty of things they advertise!—But you really should take more care of your health; you know how subject you are to these dreadful bilious attacks. I think it must have been that coffee that upset you at last, at our little party; for it made me ill, too; else I should have come and seen you long before now,” she said, rather hurriedly.

“You are very good, Madeleine—I think it *was* the coffee,” said Camille, very drily; adding significantly, “I shall give up coffee decidedly after *we are married!*”

“It is, then, to be at last—after the cruel divisions and struggles we have endured—this marriage of ours?” said Madeleine, in sweet and tender accents.

“On this condition alone Mr. Behringbright confers upon me ten thousand pounds, to become a partner in my house at Lyons,” said Camille, with a deep sigh.

“I shall make your fortune then, after all, dearest Camille,” said Madeleine, playfully; “and besides, Mr. Behringbright has generously settled upon me an annuity of three hundred a year, as long as we *live*, pleasantly and amicably, of course, together, and in France. Is it not an immense generosity?”

This was her first allusion to the presence of the gentleman in question, who was, however, there on the arrival, with another—not quite a stranger, either, to Madeleine Graham—in a black suit and white choker. It was not any of the resident clergy of the Lakes, but a reverend gentlemen who happened to be on an excursion there, having heard that Mrs. Sparrowgrass, the mother of the Sparrowgrasses—who rented one of his pews, and had a capital jointure—was also tourifying in the south of Ireland. It was, in short, the Reverend Jabez Bulteel, whom Mr. Behringbright, in search of a facile binder of wedlock's bonds, had impressed on present service.

Camille murmured, in reply to his intended bride's remark, “It is impossible to do justice to the unexampled nobleness of that illustrious millionaire. Six thousand francs yearly endowment from him! You will need little or nothing from me!”

"Except your *constant society and surveillance*, it is understood, Monsieur Le Tellier," said Mr. Behringbright.

"Very true—most true—I comprehend my mission," replied the poor young man, shrugging his shoulders, and elevating what remained of his eyebrows; "she will not *poison me easily again*, and I shall preserve her from the danger of being tempted to inflict so much suffering on others!"

This was an ill-timed observation, and might have proved fatal to the whole arrangement, had not Madeleine Graham been most thoroughly aware of the overwhelming urgency of her position. Nothing short of being immediately denounced and delivered over to the hands of justice was assured to her in case she refused an exact compliance with what had been determined upon with regard to her future destinies. She made, however, a clever and graceful attempt, *à la Française*, to parry the force of her betrothed's last remark, and incidentally to wound the oppressive urger on of the whole proceeding.

"I confess, then, to have made this attempt on your life, you so properly denounce, Camille, in a moment of madness—driven to despair by the relentless necessity of marrying another whom I did not love. But I intended to *die with you*. You remember well that I partook of the coffee with you?"

"I remember you did so: but, also, you have not lost your hair, Miss Graham! That is a slight discrepancy—no Kalydor will ever restore mine!"

"Then I am sure you ought to be obliged to me for life—for consenting to marry such a ridiculous, bald-looking creature!" said Madeleine, playfully but passionately. Mr. Behringbright hastened to interrupt this interlude. "Let us proceed at once to our business," he said; "our patient has not strength enough at present for a fatiguing altercation. Here is the licence for the marriage and the ring, Monsieur Le Tellier—you will be pleased to proceed with the ceremony now, reverend sir."

"I am ready," replied the Reverend Jabez Bulkeel, pleasantly. "'Ready, ay, ready!' is as much my motto as that of the distinguished family of the Napiers. 'Who giveth this woman to this man?' I beg your pardon, Miss Graham, for the expression; it is in the rubric; *young lady*, I should have said. I remember you at the Misses Sparx's finishing school; you were an ornament to it."

"I give away this woman," responded Mr. Behringbright, quite heartily; and the ceremony which was most truly "that same," proceeded at once.

It took hardly ten minutes to transform Miss Madeleine Graham into Madame Camille Le Tellier. The happy pair were not overwhelmed with congratulations by the company at the conclusion. There was no *déjeuner* given *à la fourchette*, or *al cuchillo*, either; but almost immediately at the conclusion of the ceremony a travelling carriage drew up at the door of the "Red Herring" tavern, loaded with Miss Graham's (that was) trunks

and handboxes, from Prospect Palace; to which being speedily added Monsieur Le Tellier's repaired portmanteau and shirt-front box, with all his letters properly restored, the married pair started for Paris. Dr. Bucktrout was commissioned and handsomely feed to see them safely so far, considering the weak state of the bridegroom's health; and on their arrival there to witness the receipt of ten thousand pounds sterling, English, on the latter's part.

Mr. Behringbright himself handed in the bride; and she did not part at all bad friends with him; rather, she said something very kind, while Camille lingered in the rear; either too weak for rapid motion, or feeling a certain faintness and dizziness come over him on the conviction of his completed happiness.

"How exceedingly good you are, Mr. Behringbright!" Madeleine said, drawing off her glove for the first time that morning, and extending her small white delicate hand to him. "But if you knew all, you would perceive that you have reason to forgive me! It was my really passionate love for you drove me on such a naughty, naughty thing! But what could I do under the circumstances? Place yourself in my position!"

"It is sufficient that I have placed you in it," said Mr. Behringbright, declining the proffered hand with a deep bow, and looking impatiently back for the lingering spouse.

"Well, I form every wish for *your* happiness in return," said Madeleine, calmly drawing on her glove again. "You are going to marry Emily Mangham, I am told; and I wish you joy, most sincerely, of the arrangement. She is rather insipid—but she will exactly suit you!"

Mr. Behringbright banged the carriage door to, and retired just as Camille came staggering dizzily out of the little inn, somewhat revived by a dose of *sal volatile*, and supported by the sturdy little frame of Dr. Bucktrout.

There was a considerable crowd to witness the departure, who gave a tremendous "hooroo!" when the bridegroom appeared. There were also some faint sibilations audible; but on the whole, people seemed to respect the young Frenchman's courage. He bowed courteously, and, with tears in his eyes, to their signs of approbation, entered the carriage—took his seat by his fair bride—fainted, and was driven away.

And so all ends happily as a fairy tale in this story—or rather commentary—of ours; for it is no harm now to let the secret out, and confess that "Madeleine Graham" is a good deal more the latter than the former. For what story, after all, have we told? Nothing but what everybody knew beforehand, with the exception of the admirable variety we have introduced in the conclusion of the tale, which surely satisfies the most exalted requirements of the species of justice styled poetical. Camille Le Tellier married to his Madeleine, and resident with her in Paris, under pain to both of forfeiting a very considerable portion of their

income after they had wasted a fair proportion of the ten thousand pounds of Monsieur's endowment, and he had embarked the rest in Isthmus of Suez shares! What more can earthly or critical Justice—which is more than earthly—and who, with the morsel actually in her watering mouth, forbore to crunch her teeth together—moved by the youth, beauty, courage, and pretty-coloured gloves and smelling-bottle of the real victim—demand?

A daring mortal once pursued the consequences that might have followed a reversal of the untoward fates of Romeo and Juliet—figured them happily married and settled in domestic bliss, with full consent of parents and all other authorities—and then what came of it? It did not end, indeed, in a case for the Divorce Court, for *causa* unutterable has not yet been accepted as a sufficient reason, even in that indulgent chamber of the Queen's justice, for a separation of person and goods; but the results were such, if I remember rightly, as made them both sorry the Shaksperian plan had not been carried out in all its details, and the affair ended as originally devised, in the tomb of the Capulets. What, then, must have been the married life of the hero and heroine whom the Reverend Jabez Bulteel united in the bonds of holy matrimony?

For the rest, if the reader's own great sagacity and experience in similar cases does not suggest to him the proper conclusions of the tale as respects other of the principal persons figuring in it, he had better, perhaps, listen to the following brief dialogue at the Dolce-Far-Niente Club, some five or six months after the blissful union at the "Red Herring," in Killarney.

"So George Cocker Behringbright is married again, after all!" exclaimed Mr. Vivian Fauntleroy, almost letting his newspaper drop with astonishment.

"Married again!" exclaimed Lord Ronald Macdonald; "who's he married? Some duchess, I suppose."

"Does anybody know," resumed Mr. Fauntleroy, drawing out the name that followed with a most contemptuous accent, "MISS EMILY MAUGHAN, of No. 17, MOTHERWELL TERRACE, DALSTON?"

"What! not that deuced fine girl, that played us such an unhandsome trick about the picnic to Glengariff, you know, at the Lakes?" ejaculated the Marquis of Ramshacklegal, from a position in the window, whence he was leering out at the milliners' girls as they passed in the bustling thoroughfare below.

"Lawk-a-mercy, no, my lord! Didn't I tell you, my lord, and—and—everybody—how she was found out poisoning a French fellow *she* was obliged to get rid of to marry Behringbright, and how then he wouldn't have her? And how she was tried for her life—no, she wasn't, but ought to have been—and how everybody said at the Lakes she ought

to be hanged—and she wasn't. And it would have been a deuced shame too—such a pretty girl—and dressed so nicely!"

It was young Mr. Sparrowgrass who made this observation, being in the course of his introduction to fashionable, political, and club life, under the auspices of his friend, Mr. Fauntleroy, established as a member of the *Dolce-Far-Niente*.

"So you did, *Sperry*; but you tell such a lot of silly stories, I hardly ever listen to anything you say," growled the Marquis.

"You listened to that, though, you did, Marquis; and said you were deuced glad she was so well served out for the way she shabbied you at the picnic!" said young Sparrowgrass, rather testily; but Mr. Fauntleroy frowned at him, and he held his peace.

"Oh, I remember you told me, Sparrowgrass; and what pretty-looking dresses she wore on the water. It would have been a shame, indeed, to have *hangth* her!" said the Honourable Francis Dundreary.

"But this Emily Maughan must be a nobody," said Sir Solomon Comynplace. "She lives at Dalston, you say, Vivian?"

"She did live at Dalston, Sir Solomon; but, I suppose, now she will live with her husband at Hyde Park, and at one or other of his country palaces. I wonder he has never sent me cards—it must be some accidental omission. Besides, cards are out of fashion. I think I must call, all the same, and offer my congratulations," said Mr. Fauntleroy.

"Well, my mother always said Mr. Behringbright would end like an old fool, just as the rest do, and take up with some senseless chit of a girl without a particle of birth or society," grumbled Lord Ronald Macdonald, indignant as a brother of Lady Flora Diana ought to be at the circumstance.

"And perhaps not a penny of fortune!" protested the British member. "That's the stupidest part mostly of these affairs. As for what you call 'birth and society,' it's all fudge and exploded humbug stuff."

"Why, her father was a bankrupt, and committed suicide!" said Mr. Fauntleroy, who had been profoundly reflecting for some moments on the name, and had an almost universal repertory of facts, as well as fiction, at command in his fertile brain.

"What a donkey!" said Sir Solomon Comynplace.

There was then a slight cessation of the intelligent dialogue. At last the Marquis inquired, with a tremendous yawn, "Is there nothing else in the paper, Fauntleroy? D—n politics!—nothing of that rubbish—anything amusing?"

"Well, nothing very particular, sir. The mad Lady Glengariff's dead—in one of her attacks, I suppose—so it was her own banshee she heard screaming—and Lord Glengariff's gone to Central America, for a year or two's travel in that 'undiscovered country, from whose bourne' I wish him a safe and happy return, I am sure."

"I know why he is going—it isn't his mother's death," said young

Sparrowgrass, who, under the auspices of Mr. Vivian Fauntleroy, was rapidly getting over the early spooniness of his character. "He was in love, too, with that Miss Graham—and so was I—and a whole lot of us—but *he's* taken it to heart, I suppose, that she has married the Frenchman, after all."

This was accepted as good history, and everybody thought the Earl very foolish indeed to concern himself so much about the loss of a woman, when there are so many more to be had everywhere!

END OF "MADELEINE GRAHAM."

THE EVENING WIND.

SOUTH-WIND, kiss the pearly ear,
Say that I, her love, am near;
Tell that through the gathering gloom
Swiftly I come!

South-wind, kiss the gentle cheek,
To my own one softly speak;
Whisper tales of heaven above
Unto my love!

South-wind, kiss the crimson mouth
With the summer of the south;
Gently guard her radiance rare
Till I am there!

South-wind, kiss the loving breast,
Where I long to be at rest;
Bear a message through the gloom—
Loved one, I come!

WILLIAM BLACK.

A LONDON ARABIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENT.

AMONG the intrepid travellers who accompanied Nadar in his famous ascent in his balloon, the "Géant," of which we have heard so much lately, was a certain M. Edouard Delessert, who is tolerably well known in his own country as a literary man, although his name is not quite so familiar to us on this side of the Channel. The trip in Nadar's unwieldy machine was not by any means the first expedition of danger in which M. Delessert had shared; he had visited the Holy Land, Sodom, Gomorrah, Zeboiim, Adamah, Zoar; and as, in a nation of blind men, a man with one eye is king, among such a home-keeping nation as the French, M. Delessert is accounted a traveller, and has published his experiences in a little volume, called "*Voyages aux Villes Maudites*," with notes by M. de Saulcy, whose alleged discoveries on the shores of the Dead Sea made him very popular with some sections of English religious society, but created only astonishment and discussion among travellers and scientific men. M. Delessert has also visited England, and has described his impressions of the country and the people, made in the course of a residence of a few days, in a letter to his friend Maxime du Camp; and as it is interesting to see ourselves as others see us, and the genuine sentiments of a foreigner touching our manners and customs may be frequently instructive, I propose to make a few extracts from M. Delessert's letter, which, by an odd coincidence, or, it may be, a still more singular design, is bound up in the same volume with his "*Voyages aux Villes Maudites*," and is entitled, "*Une Nuit dans la Cité de Londres*."

I pass over the author's preliminary reflections, which are not particularly brilliant or original; and he seems himself to be aware of this fact, and deprecates his friend's impatience of his dulness by assuring him, with a very comical inconsequence, that he should be much more prolix if he gave way to all the dismal impressions resulting from his visit to "this little island, so great, it must be acknowledged, but at the same time of such an *irritating* size!"

He arrives at the *Euton* Square Terminus, and is rudely awakened, by the noise of the engine and the grating of the brakes against the wheels, from a gentle slumber, in which he agreeably mingled the most tender recollections with anticipations of a formidable meal, prepared by the care of a Parisian *cuisinier*, from which one may reasonably suppose that his destination was Leicester Square, or its vicinity. He does not, however, further enlighten us on this point, but plunges at once into the midst of his story.

"You know," he says—although it is highly probable his friend did not know,—“that in the autumn the western part of London, the West End, celebrated for its squares and powdered lackeys, rich and luxurious London, in short, is completely deserted. The people retire to their

country houses; the grouse are all killed, but there are partridges, hares, and pheasants for sportsmen; besides, the harvest has been got in, and they will commence shortly to break their necks, to their great satisfaction, fox-hunting. In fact, until the month of March the enormous manor-houses are crowded with visitors. The schemes of the young men, and the flirtations of the young ladies, assume a form which will end next spring (if it please Heaven) in marriage in the majority of cases, and in the others in negative results, to be carried on to the next season in the country. But at the opposite extremity of the city, in the east, the current of business and commerce never stops; there is ever the same feverish life, the same busy crowd in that immense ant-hill called the City, where the most important affairs in the world are transacted in the darkest and dingiest places of business; vehicles traverse Fleet Street by millions without stopping an instant [we only wish this was the case, particularly when we are anxious to catch the train at London Bridge]; all *living* existence [whatever that may be] is directed towards this spot. Behind the City, going towards *the Port* [our author evidently imagining that the port of London is a locality] and the docks, there are neighbourhoods which Dickens has made the theatre of his observations and of his dramas; and *Oliver Twist* had his origin in the midst of streets where certainly nineteen out of twenty West End Englishmen never set their foot.

"I had long wished to profit by the first opportunity that presented to visit these mysterious resorts; but although I speak enough English to make myself understood, I do not speak sufficiently well to prevent me being known to be a foreigner, and without a guide I had no sure means of finding my way among the labyrinth of dark and narrow streets; finally [and now we come to the real difficulty], I candidly avow I did not desire to make a parade of courage, which is useless if it is not certain of success [there speaks your true Parisian!], and receive, on my entrance into the first den I might come to, a punishment in proportion to my indiscretion, and take home with me, humbled and penitent, one of my eyes closed up, or some of my ribs knocked in, not to speak of other disagreeables, which render it impossible for a stranger to pursue these physiological investigations alone."

However, thanks to a letter of recommendation from a friend to a personage of rank in the police, M. Delessert has two inspectors of police placed at his disposal to act as guides through the lower circles of London life. Punctually at the hour appointed the inspectors arrive, perfectly well dressed, and polite beyond expression; and after taking their opinion as to the propriety of his costume for the journey they were about to undertake, our author places himself entirely in their hands, and starts in a cab on a voyage of discovery. He goes on to say:—

"Behind the Bank of England the cab took us down streets completely unknown to me, so narrow that frequently there was hardly room for a

single vehicle to pass, all, however, lighted with gas, and built upon the same model as the rest of London; for it is a curious circumstance that these resorts of thieves and robbers present the most quiet and respectable appearance externally."

How could he expect anything else? Did he imagine that the London thieves exhibited signs indicative of their calling, or emblazoned their names and speciality in large letters upon their dwellings? Only think of reading the announcement, "James Sykes, Professor of the Art of Appropriation;" or, "Israel Fagin, Petticoat Lane Pantechnicon, and Dépôt for Surreptitious Swag"!

Their first visit was to what M. Delessert calls the "Model Baths of Whitechapel, in *Goulston Square*;" his guides, as he says, being anxious, through a *mal-adroit* national vanity, to show him the remedy before the disease. He pays a just tribute to the public spirit of those by whose efforts these establishments have been erected in England, and wishes that his own country possessed similar advantages—a desire which the Emperor is now about to fulfil on a large scale; and one's only surprise is that our example had not been earlier followed. But the Emperor probably knows that his people don't care very much about cold water, and have hardly got to regard ablution as a necessity.

Leaving the Model Baths, their next visit is to a low public-house, to which is attached a dancing saloon, "about twelve feet square, lit with gas, but without any fire; the walls papered with a rose-coloured paper, representing landscapes, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Coliseum, &c. A few men, seated round a walnut table, were playing cards; two or three boys, about ten or twelve years old, were smoking their pipes, with their caps cocked on one side, as if already quite *blasé* for any amusement; and in one corner of the room a man was playing a violin. The dancing, which had ceased for a moment, recommenced. It was the *gig*. [So our author says.]

"In order to set an example to the others, the son of the master of the house—one of the children who were smoking—placed himself, with imperturbable gravity, and with his long pipe in his mouth, opposite to a great lout about five feet six in height, and the ballet began. A slight tremulous movement, caused by first touching the heel and then the toe on the ground, repeated alternately by each foot; a gradual increase of rapidity in this movement, until it reached an inconceivable quickness; then a leap, terminated by a pirouette and a *chassé croisé*, will give you a general notion of this barbarous dance. When one of a couple of dancers is tired another gets up, just as children do playing a long rope, and so it goes on."

On quitting this place, one of the inspectors informs the traveller that the whole of the people whom he had seen were "thieves by profession." "There isn't one," said he, "that has not figured at the police court at least three or four times. The master of the house is a thief, his wife and

daughter are no better, and the boy whom you saw dancing has been already convicted three times, and he is scarcely twelve."

"In order to vary the singular impressions which the sight of this public-house had left," says the narrator, "they conducted me successively to several *cafés chantants*, the 'American Wizard,' the 'Brown Bear,' and the 'Mahogany Bar.' These places are small theatres, imperceptible from the street, with crosses beneath, upon the backs of which a lodge receives the pots of beer and the glasses of brandy. There are no boxes or pit stalls, but a single gallery runs round the room, and abuts on the proscenium. The stage is about twelve feet wide, and four feet deep from the back to the footlights. Three violins and a bass compose the orchestra, and from time to time singers come forward, and vociferate popular songs, to the delight of the audience, usually consisting of lost women, sailors, and vagabonds. In one of these places, the 'White Swan'—or the 'Paddy's Goose,' as it is called by its frequenters—we heard an apologetic defence of marriage sung by a poor, sickly-looking singer, with a cold. When he enumerated the advantages of that institution, he was hissed by the ladies of the company; but, on the contrary, he was greeted with applause when he came to speak of its disagreeables.

"After having visited seven or eight of these *cafés*," pursues M. Delessert, "my companions announced to me that they were about to introduce me to another class of people, consisting of scamps and vagabonds, whereas those whom I had already seen were all thieves."

They then visit an establishment called, according to the narrator, the "Coq of Neptune,"—the name being written in English; which is described as being at the corner of a tolerably large street, and presenting outside the ordinary appearance of a tavern, very clean, attractive, and well lighted, but the theatre inside of the most revolting confusion and debauch. Sailors, just disembarked, brought there to be robbed in their drunkenness; dock labourers and thieves lolling on wooden forms placed round the tables, upon which some were stretched dead drunk. I pass over these details, which are probably only too true; but we are too familiar with similar descriptions for them to affect us in the same manner as they doubtless did M. Delessert's countrymen.

At the suggestion of one of the inspectors they next go to a lodging-house for American emigrants in Glasshouse Yard, *White Chapel*. Here, according to our friend, before the intervention of the authorities, as many as four hundred persons were lodged. The first and second stories are divided into compartments, like the berths of a ship. The room was about thirty-five feet long, and twenty-five feet wide, and contained ninety persons.

"Twelve o'clock struck from the clock of a neighbouring church, and M. P——, one of the inspectors, asked if I should like to see an Irish lodging-house as a specimen; and on my replying in the affirmative, we bent our way towards *East Saint George parish, in the Blacksmiths arm's*

Court,"—a most wonderful dislocation of Blacksmiths' Arms Court; St. George's in the East. The description of this miserable place is painfully graphic, and is but little impaired by the ambitious straining for effect so common in the writings of most Frenchmen, who are usually more desirous of painting an effective picture than of giving a truthful account of what they have seen.

On emerging from the lodging-house the policeman observes to his foreign companion,—

"Well, that is misery, isn't it? There is, however, I assure you, a good deal of progress already, and you have not seen the dirtiest of these lodgings."

"That one has been quite enough for me," exclaims the horrified Parisian. "Good Heaven! what can the others be like?"

"Much the same as this," replies the phlegmatic inspector, "but here at least there is no disease to make the place still more unfit for habitation. —No sickness, Master Jinks?" said he, speaking to the lodging-house keeper.

"No, sir."

"All right, then."

This last dialogue is printed in English, in order to show the author's proficiency in our mother tongue, I suppose, and to give the narrative a little local colour; on the same principle that lady novelists are accustomed to season the conversation of their hero or heroine with such scraps of French as, "*Mais, oui*," "*Mes Dées*!" "*Si, Signor*," "*Madonna mia*," &c., according to their nationality.

About half-past three the inspectors informed M. Delessert that if he were not content they were ready to accompany him wherever he desired to go, but that there was nothing fresh to see, with the exception of the Pavilion Rooms, which ought to be still open. They accordingly visit these rooms, and find some seasoned toppers still there; and make the acquaintance of "a sort of singer," named *Burges*, who gave them two romances of his own composition, which M. Delessert describes as very witty, although cynical. But for my part I suspect that the Frenchman did not understand what they were about; and small blame to him as an English scholar, if they were anything like the comic songs that delight the public just at present.

They wind up by looking in at the Whitechapel Police Court, where the traveller recognizes some of those whom he had seen during the night, and is warned not to approach too near to the gratings of the cells, as the prisoners are of a turbulent nature, as he expresses it.

While he is there an Irishman is brought in, and a scene takes place, which rather disturbs my confidence in M. Delessert's fidelity of description, and makes me think that in this instance he must have drawn upon his imagination for the deposition of the policeman, which was to this effect:—

" 'I was going my rounds peaceably in — Street [“I do not remember the name,” says the author] when this gentleman passed by me, with two others, and before I could see anything I found myself on the pavement, with my legs in the air. On getting up I could only catch this gentleman, and here he is.’

“Then the Irishman, who was a well-built man, and had not a bad-looking countenance, commenced a long speech, and took advantage of the opportunity to enumerate his perfectly honourable antecedents, which brought a smile on the grave face of the policeman; and he concluded by saying,—

“‘No, gentlemen; I have never in my life thrown anybody—anybody in the world, on his back in the street.’ This was said with great emphasis.

“‘Excepting me!’ replied the policeman, sententiously, rubbing his back; and the Irishman was put in his cell.”

This reads much more like one of the French police cases which serve to fill up the innumerable comic almanacs in which the Parisians delight; and the policeman’s story in particular is most amusingly French.

At the conclusion of the episode just related, M. Delessert is about to take leave of his two friends the inspectors, but they will not think of his doing so, and insist upon accompanying him to his door, when they separate with mutual expressions of esteem and satisfaction.

“And now,” says M. Maxime du Camp’s correspondent, in conclusion, “do not expect me to make the slightest comment on what I have described; the subject would take too much time to explain, and my observations would take too long to develop. You have been doubtless struck by all that is allowed, and all that is not prevented, in these haunts of vice and debauchery. You will think with me, perhaps, that when a foul ulcer exists in the midst of society, we ought not therefore to shut our eyes, and leave it festering and contagious; you would rather that we should endeavour to cure it, or at least to diminish the circumstances as much as possible. This is not the system with our neighbours, and it is not our business to give them advice. Every day, happily, those dens which I visited (thanks to the facilities afforded me) gradually decrease in number. Those philanthropists who occupy themselves with the material as well as the spiritual amelioration of their fellow-creatures—and they are the true benefactors of their race—already obtain encouraging results. They will never cause the poor to become rich, for to do that something more than philanthropy is needed; but at least they will enable them to support their poverty, and will raise them in their own eyes, and that seems to me about the object to seek and to attain.”

ADVENTURES OF A QUEEN'S MESSENGER.

NO. I.—MY FIRST EXPEDITION.

If memory fail me not, it was during the first week of January, 18—, that I lay snug and warm between the sheets of a comfortable four-poster, in one of the pleasant watering-places on the coast of South Devon. Devonian though it was, and, generally speaking, mild of climate, in this midwinter-time the snow lay thick on the high roads, and the frost was intense, even to the borders of the sea. It was, in fact, such a morning as disposes any one not particularly engaged to take an extra snooze, when the postman brought me an ominous-looking letter bearing her Majesty's arms, which in a few words altered the whole tenor of my previous existence. Having read it, I placed it under my pillow, and, if I recollect rightly after the lapse of so many years, slept soundly for two long hours. Whether reason acted wisely during this calm repose I know not, but no sooner had I roused myself, and doused myself in a cold bath—January though it was—than I made up my mind to answer the letter in person, and to proceed on the duties it proposed I should undertake when and wheresoever they might call me. With this determination, I started that night by mail to London; and for the benefit of my young friends about to commence the battle of life, and who have the good sense to believe that honourable labour in any position brings with it health, ease of mind, and independence, let me assure them this habit of taking time by the forelock has ever stood my friend during my career as a Queen's foreign messenger.

Suffice it to say, that on my arrival in London, I forthwith presented myself to the writer of the letter to which I have alluded, who courteously welcomed me to the "Agapemone," as he jocosely termed the office of which he was the treble head, and then, without preface or delay, asked me when I should be prepared to commence my duties.

"At once," I replied.

"That is well," he said, smiling. "I fear, then, you will have to start to-morrow night for Petersburg or Stockholm. Neither the season nor the weather is precisely agreeable for a northern journey, but a rough beginning will make future duties more agreeable." This said, he shook me by the hand,—he, for all I know to the contrary, to dine with the Queen, I to prepare for a trip to the North Pole, or northwards at least.

As I lay me down, scarcely to sleep, that night, with the knowledge that a new career in life had commenced for me, and that the frozen rivers of the North lay in the route I was about to take, on my way to countries and people I had never hitherto visited, I own my heart sank when I thought of my quiet home in the far west, its myrtles and magnolias, geraniums and fuchsias, even in midwinter-time, and the loved ones who had ministered to my comforts and my happiness, all of whom I had

left scarce twenty-four hours previously. And now a new career was before me; and although many years have flown away since that bitter cold but to me eventful night, be it only when absent or on leaving my home, the same feelings cluster on my heart and oppress me, which are the only drawbacks to the active, onerous, and at times laborious duties of her Majesty's foreign messengers.

And now I am about to start fairly on my first journey. It is possible that one out of every hundred educated Englishmen one meets with in these days of locomotion may have travelled by precisely the same route which I took to reach my destination; at least, I am not blind to the fact, that if you chance to hint in a railway carriage that you have visited Kantechatka, or Peru, or the moon, you invariably stumble on some one who has been there before you, and who knows far more of the place, the people, and the language than you do; at least he fancies he does, and is ready to assert the fact five to four or two to one, if you will have it. Therefore, not being, I hope, of a quarrelsome nature, and not disposed to bet on anything but the Derby or Leger, I write these notes for the ninety-nine who have not visited the places of which I write.

Ere I start, I am bold enough to offer a word or two of fatherly counsel to Young England: whether they will deem me an old fool for my intrusion, or profit by my experience to their own comfort, and add to their country's honour by following it, is quite another question. I give it as I believe it, and as I have practically experienced its truths. I once recollect having seen a rather clever caricature, which represented a stout English gentleman sitting alone in a Prussian first-class railway carriage, with spectacles on his nose and the *Times* newspaper before him, while a large bull-dog sat by his side, showing his teeth to the guard, who pops his head in at the window, and seeing the dog, turns to some lady passengers seeking places, and says, "*Réservez pour un milord Anglais.*" The man possibly was a vulgar pork butcher.

Now for years it has been my fate, or duty, or pleasure, or pain, or whatever you like to term it, to visit every capital in Europe,—from St. Petersburg to Madrid, Vienna to Constantinople. It is true that I am a tolerable linguist, yet while I cannot call to mind that I ever met with any but the most trivial annoyances, I have, on the other hand, experienced no end of kindness and courtesy, simply because from the very moment I place my foot on the Continent I endeavour to forget that I am partial to bitter beer, boiled pork, and peas pudding; in fact, I try—though at times I scarcely feel satisfied with foreign arrangements, and detest numerous foreign modes and manners—as far as possible to give myself up, physically and mentally, on the one hand to be half poisoned, and on the other to be sadly discomforted. The moment I cross the Channel, I make up my mind to allow a Frenchman to think that France is the finest country on earth, and Frenchmen alone fit to live; the Zouaves far superior to our guards, fusiliers, or marines; French cooking, whether at Phillips' or at a cabaret,

unequalled; that by washing in cold water metatunally I am liable to catch cold; that potatoes are only produced in Ireland; that soap is an expensive luxury; and that apples are grown in hothouses. This is the rule I follow as regards all countries out of England, and thereby obtain considerable comfort and good-will.

And now we will go to Stockholm. I pray my readers to bear in mind, that when I first attained the honour of being one of her Majesty's messengers, very many of the railways which now intersect the face of Europe existed only in speculative imagination; and that, with railways, the means and modes of foreign travel have materially altered. By-and-bye I shall lead them from the city of the Czar to the city of the Sultan, from Vienna to Madrid, and to various other places, describing those places as they are in the present day.

I am now bound for Stockholm. Consider my having safely touched at Copenhagen, of which city we will talk together by-and-bye. Enough that I left that city by steamer one afternoon in the early part of March, 18—, and after touching at various places on the Danish coast, the last being Elsinore, crossed the Sound, and was landed at Helsingborg in Sweden..

To do bare justice to the Custom-house authorities, they gave me no trouble, and I soon found myself at the small and only tolerable inn in the place, where I was shown into a room, the closeness of which was at first almost stifling. It really seemed to swim in heat, a substantial fat host, which got well hold of me the moment I entered, gathering round and about me on every side, till I was brought to the very verge of suffocation, and held, as it were, tight in its folds. Forthwith I rushed to the window: imagine my horror when I found, after repeated and desperate endeavours to open it, that my efforts were in vain. It was double; the inner panes hermetically pasted and puttied up to keep out the cold and keep in the heat, which was boiling me: not a single outlet was left, not one solitary pane to open and let in the cooling and purifying air of heaven.. I felt absolutely aghast, when, sinking down on a chair, I reflected that the room had possibly not had an airing since the commencement of the long winter, that hundreds of persons had eaten, drunk, and smoked in it during that time, and that now it was my fate to do the same. The only possible mode, in fact, by which the room could be aired at all was by opening a round hole near the top of the stove, thus causing an intolerable draught.

I confess to have felt not a little miserable at the prospect before me. Yet what was to be done? I was no longer in Old England, with all its substantial comforts. Why, nothing but resign myself calmly to my fate, —be suffocated, in fact, if necessary; it was a part of my duty; but I was determined to quit my pestilential abode with the least possible delay, and

therefore set resolutely to work to consider how I—an Englishman, finding himself, by command of her Majesty, or her Majesty's principal Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs (how little he thought of me!), in a country of the language of which I had not the most remote notion—was to accomplish a journey of some four hundred miles to the Swedish metropolis. Moreover, I knew that I was bound to travel night and day; indeed, I felt that, after all, it was as well to be frozen or lost by the way as suffocated. Accordingly, I commenced operations for a forward movement; the sooner the journey was over, the better for the wretched traveller who was utterly ignorant of the Swedish tongue.

Happily, Providence always aids those who endeavour to aid themselves. I discovered ere long that my landlord's son-in-law was a German;—what a prize in the lottery of life, under the circumstances!—moreover, the porter—at least, so he called himself, though I imagine his duties were light—was a most energetic Swede, who could make himself in a manner comprehensible in that language. So, as a preliminary step, I requested him to show me the domicile of the governor, in order to obtain what is called a “brick,” which is simply an oblong piece of paper, on which is engraved the arms of Sweden, a number, and the words, “Curin Bricks,”—a valuable document peculiar to Sweden, at least such is my belief, though the *Potroigna* of Russia is somewhat similar. This document is of very great importance to a traveller. Such a paper is rarely entrusted to any one save Government officials or Crown messengers, native or foreign.

The fortunate possessor is entitled to horses at any station before any one else, and at all hours, day or night. The peasants and proprietors at the posthouses pay the greatest respect to the bearer of the talismanic paper. Indeed, it is asserted that King Bernadotte, once wishing to reward some one who had done him a good service, granted him a “brick” for life, adding, that it was the most useful present he could make to him. Its power is represented to go so far as to enable the holder even to take the posthorses from another traveller's carriage; if on arriving at a posthouse he finds no others.*

I found his Excellency the commandant, a little plump and puffy old gentleman, at the house of a friend; where I believe he was enjoying his evening rubber. Being interrupted in the middle of it did not precisely please him; why should it? Swedes are like other people, and at first he made great objections to entrusting me with so precious a document. On my convincing him, however, that I was the right man in the right place, as far as my duty was concerned, if not for my own comfort, his heart softened, and taking me to his house, where he offered me a “grog,” he

* I have since been informed that the peculiar advantages of the “bricks” here named are rather the result of custom than sanctioned by law. The badge is nevertheless held in great respect and veneration by the people of the country, as I had reason to know in the course of my travels.

made out and handed me the "bricks," which of course I received with bows and thanks; and having swallowed the grog, to the health of his Excellency, wished him "good night," and returned to my stifling apartment.

The next question was how to obtain a conveyance, and of what nature. After some discussion, the question resolved itself into my hiring or buying a carriage of the landlord. In order to decide the matter, we had a sort of little congress, consisting of the above-named gentleman, his son-in-law the porter, and my humble self. The odds were certainly against me, three to one. I do not think I should be much out did I say, by multiplying the interests of the three, that they stood at thirty to one. It was a long and serious conference; but eventually I succumbed, and became the possessor of an antiquated britzaka, in doubtful order and very heavy, furnished with some old ropes and leather dignified with the name of harness.

It was then decided that I should send on a "forbud," or *avant-courier*, to order horses for the first sixteen stages, as far as a place called Tönköping,* and the German set to work very civilly to fill up a number of little tickets, with the names of the various posthouses or stations, the hour at which the horses were to be ready at each, and so forth; and at eight the same evening I had started my first "forbud" in a diminutive peasant's cart of most peculiar construction, drawn by one horse, and containing my portmanteau, well covered with matting, thus relieving my cumbersome vehicle of some portion of its weight. The "forbud" was to proceed one stage, where he would be succeeded by another, and so on.

Money was the next question, and I despatched the porter to the bank. He returned with a great amount of change, in notes of three and six dollars, and an abundance of small silver coin, besides a handful of copper, which is absolutely indispensable previous to commencing a journey in Sweden, as the poor postboy who drives you rarely possesses a halfpenny.

Supper now made its appearance, not before I required it, served by a smiling girl—the first specimen of the Swedish "friga" I had seen,—whose chief peculiarity consisted in a gay particoloured handkerchief, tied under the chin; and as I discussed the savoury messes—which long abstinence and a hearty appetite made palatable—in my suffocating bedroom, I questioned my German ally, who remained throughout the meal, most perseveringly as to the value of the money, the cost of posting, and every other little particular which I judged might avail me *en route*, bribing him from time to time with one of my best cigars, which he smoked eagerly, always in my diabolical bedroom:

* Tönköping, not Köping, pronounced Chuping, the *u* as in church. It means a place where things are bought,—a market town, in fact. Köpa is to buy; Kopman, a merchant. Of course, the root is the same as in the German words *kaufen*, *kaufman*; the English words *cheapen*, *Chespaide*, &c.

Never was bribe more successful; by the mere force of tobacco I assailed, and took captive, and conquered the German's heart. I saw and knew my victory, and profited by it, attacking him again and again, and making him write down and pronounce the numbers and several leading words in Swedish for my guidance during the expected perils before me.

At last we parted,—I with many thanks, he with one cigar between his lips and another in his pocket, and with many assurances of mutual consideration and esteem; while I, in preference to sighing for what I could not get, took that which fortune for the time had allotted, crept in between the bed-clothes, and snatched a few hours of fitful, feverish sleep, such as can be imagined under the circumstances, and in so suffocating an atmosphere.

Four a.m., however, had scarce ceased striking on the town clock of Helsingborg ere my trusty friend the porter aroused me. Without a moment's hesitation I bolted from my bed, endeavoured to open my smarting eyes, plunged my head into cold and refreshing water, and felt I was awake, dressed myself as speedily as possible in the thickest clothing I had, swallowed some bad coffee and pocketed some stale rusks, enveloped myself in as many warm wraps and coats as possible, encased my legs in a pair of long felt boots, the warmest of all leggings and foot-rags, if there be such a word, and at 5 a.m. one memorable Friday morning started fairly on my way for Stockholm.

The stages were generally from one to two Swedish miles long—a Swedish mile being about six and two-thirds English,—which took about an hour. At each station I found my horses waiting, and no great time was lost. I wrote my name in the "Dagbok," stating where I had come from and whither I was going, as also the number of horses I employed, paid the postboy, and was off again.

The horses travelled well, especially the small ones. Down hill we drove at a great pace, which somewhat excited my nerves, considering the state of my rickety old vehicle. But there was a sweet little cherub somewhere aloft who watched over me, and brought me through all my troubles safely. Moreover, I got used to it, after spurring down half a dozen slippery hills, as one does to many far more disagreeable things in the battle of life.

Meanwhile, my "briks"—I do not mean to pun—proved a brick indeed. When a postboy did not drive fast enough, I flourished it at him, shouting energetically in English, French, German, or all three mixed, putting in here and there a stray word of Swedish, culled from my limited stock. If this did not at once have the desired effect, I roared—ay, screamed—and waved the talisman frantically in the air, when the man or boy was effectually awed, and urged on his cattle with whip and voice. Subsequently, when arriving at posthouses where my horses had not been ordered, it was astonishing to witness the alteration in the stupid face of a surly boor, who at first declared there were no horses to be had.

When I pulled out the all-powerful badge he was alive in a moment, and, full of apologies for his mistake, rushed to the stables and produced fresh cattle without delay. Each horse generally costs about sevenpence a Swedish mile: but in some cases there is what is termed "entreprenade;" that is to say, the posting is contracted for under certain regulations, and then the expense is one-half more: it is also greater at all towns.

The whole posting service is under Government. At each posthouse a book, called the "Dagbak," is kept. This enumerates the number of horses which the postmaster is bound to furnish. These the farmers in the neighbourhood are obliged to provide or contribute; and as very many of the farms are at some distance from the posthouse, it can easily be conceived that, when the horses have not been ordered beforehand, great delays must frequently occur, more especially in summer, when they are working all day in the fields.

In the "Dagbak" there is also a column for any remarks or complaints which the traveller may have to make. This is inspected from time to time by the proper authorities, and fines are inflicted if the postmaster is proved to have neglected his duty.

The poor postboys I found very honest, and I had little trouble in paying them; for the distance between each station being inserted in the "Dagbak," the amount due to them was easily calculated, and a very small sum in addition made them happy for the day.

At first I travelled very fast. The novelty of my position, the few delays, the clear bright atmosphere—everything, in fact, contrived to make the hours slip rapidly away; but in the middle of the dark night I came to a standstill, and for some time was completely ignorant as to why my horses were not ready, while I listened with a feeling almost of despair to a man, who, in answer to my broken sentences in various, and to him unknown tongues, assisted by signs, poured out a torrent of words in his native Swedish of which I understood not a syllable.

At last, however, I heard a cart come rattling up; something was brought out of the miserable posthouse, put on it, and away it went. The truth was out; I saw it all at once, for as the cart rolled away I recognized my belongings covered with matting, and I knew I had caught up my "forbud," or courier, notwithstanding a ten hours' start. He, doubtless, had been drinking his hours away, oblivious of duty, and regardless of the stranger whose money he was receiving. I own that I felt for the time perfectly helpless. Complain I could not, for no one could understand me; so I held my tongue and endured—a process to be recommended. Fresh horses, however, soon made their appearance, and away I went again, about noon on the following day, arriving at Tönköping, where I got some dinner, and picked up a German, to whom I gladly gave a seat in my carriage for a couple of stages, and who kindly acted as interpreter.

The snow was now falling heavily, but we had some pleasant converse.

and I was sorry when the little town of Gremen hove in sight and we bade each other adieu. After a cup of warm tea, I felt once more left entirely to my own devices. Night had come on, and at every station I had to rouse up the postmaster and wait for fresh horses. This always caused a delay of at least half an hour, during which time I generally dozed in my carriage or walked about outside—for the big room inside the posthouse was never very inviting. All the inmates appeared to me to sleep together in a sort of social, promiscuous manner, which was neither pleasing to contemplate nor pleasant to the sense of smell. Man and wife would be in bed in one corner, children in another—sometimes all huddled together—servants in another; the apartment hermetically sealed, of course,—very close and very disagreeable.

Now and then I did go in and rouse them a little, in order to induce them, in like manner, to rouse their people; when the postmaster would get out of bed, followed by his wife, who proceeded to her toilette in the most unconcerned manner in my presence. And thus I travelled onwards, consoling myself with the certainty that at all events I was approaching nearer and nearer to Stockholm; and that a little more perseverance would bring me to my goal.

The road for the first day had been sandy; the scenery not unlike that of the south of Ireland—the county of Cork, for instance,—fields divided by hedges or walls. As I advanced, however, into the heart of the country, huge forests of pine and fir had to be traversed. The roads, for the most part, became fearfully deep and muddy during the day, when it thawed; whereas at night they were frozen again, and alippery and dangerous, and very cold. I was, however, tolerably wrapped up, and suffered little. Moreover, I had well provisioned myself—an indispensable precaution for travellers in Sweden, as there are very few places where anything eatable is to be obtained. But at length my troubles were lessened, for on the afternoon of Monday, at 5 p.m., I reached the capital of Sweden, having left Helmsfysa on the Friday previously, and performed the journey in eighty-three hours. It appears a long time in these days of railway flights; but when all circumstances are considered, it is not marvellous. Towards the end of the journey I confess to having felt tired and subdued; in fact, I experienced the sensations of a far superior man—one Sterne—who justly remarks, "There is one sweet lenitive, at least, for evils which nature holds out to us." So I took it kindly, and fell asleep, and the first word which roused me was Stockholm. Indeed, I was so fast asleep that the postboy had to shake me, when I awoke with a start, in complete ignorance of where I was, how I had come, or what I had to do. But arrived in Stockholm, an English wash and a good dinner convinced me I had little to complain of, and I awoke on the following morning as a giant refreshed, and ready to do battle with the world.

My first day in Stockholm, with the reminiscences of my journey then fresh in my memory, was sufficiently attractive. Having presented my credentials, I strolled about the town, and was introduced to several Swedes. We take off our hats ceremoniously and bow to each other twice; we then come to close quarters and shake hands, upon which the following colloquy ensues:—

The Swede (in French).—"I am charmed to make your acquaintance. I conclude you are just arrived."

Myself.—"Since yesterday, Monsieur le Comte." (This is the safest title to give them, for they most of them appear to possess it; if they have not, they are flattered.)

The Swede.—"Indeed. What do you think of Sweden?"

Now this tolerably naïve question somewhat staggered me at first, as I could only wonder how I, an utter stranger to the country, was to judge whether I liked it or not. I own I felt confused, and mumbled out something about my not having been long enough in Sweden to venture to express an opinion; adding, that the situation of Stockholm struck me as very charming. The conversation then continues.

The Swede.—"Did you come here by land, sir?"

Myself.—"Yes, Monsieur le Comte."

The Swede.—"Then, sir, your journey must have been most fatiguing."

How many times in the course of the first few weeks of my residence in Stockholm was I asked if my journey had not been most painful and fatiguing! The question was universal, and by degrees I prepared a regular answer to it, and upon its being put to me, immediately launched into a most vivid description of all my adventures, troubles, and perplexities.

On the conversation languishing, we shake hands again, and assure each other simultaneously that we are charmed to have made each other's acquaintance, take off our hats with a prodigious bow, and depart on our several ways.

The day was fortunately very favourable, clear and bright, a beautiful blue sky overhead, fresh, but not too cold, with a feeling of dryness and pureness of atmosphere which made my steps light, and exhilarated my feelings, driving away all discontent or spleen, leaving me in love with the place at first sight. There was no withstanding it; the novelty of the scene, the comfort I experienced in having successfully accomplished a long and tedious journey—everything, in fact, contrived to put me in the highest spirits. The situation of Stockholm is certainly cheering. The noble palace, a stately edifice, which rises up in its simple and substantial grandeur above all other objects, the waters of the Baltic, and the Mälar lake intersecting the city, and cutting it up into islands; the shipping, the suburbs of the south crowning the distance, the costume of the honest Dalecarlians, and the good-humoured, bright faces of the "pigas," or

servant girls, with their black handkerchiefs tastefully enveloping their heads. What can I say more? Stockholm has been compared to Venice. It is not Venice, but has a distinctive character of its own, difficult to compare with any other place.

I confess that it appeared so strange, so new, so really beautiful, that before long I was unconsciously answering the invariable question of my new acquaintances with enthusiasm, declaring that I already found Sweden charming, with a generous heartiness that rejoiced their patriotic hearts.

The question, "Where shall I dine?" is one of the most important in the life of man; and in Sweden dinner is a very serious undertaking. You are asked to dine at the house of a friend, most probably at four o'clock, always verbally; so that if you live in Stockholm, and go much into society, it is absolutely necessary for your servant or yourself—or, better still, both—to keep a list of your engagements. There is, strange to say, hardly ever a mistake made, and certainly much time is saved from not having to answer innumerable notes. A man comes round with the list, generally early in the morning,—I scarcely recollect at what hour, but I confess to having received most of my invitations in bed, and to have been roused out of more than one sleep by a summons to a gastronomical treat. If you are of the *élite* and fortunate, you may open your eyes to behold a gorgeous Court footman with an immense plume, who summons you to a palace "feed," to use a vulgar term. He penetrates into your bedroom, draws himself up in military style, bawls the invitation into your ear, and insists on an answer. If you possess a servant, however, and he is a sharp fellow, he never allows any profane tread upon such holy ground or planks, but answers for you, according to his knowledge of your engagements, of which he ought to be well informed.

The invitations are, as I have said, generally for four o'clock, and punctually at four you make your appearance—in a white tie, even should there be no ladies. You enter the house, leave your great-coat, and, if winter, your goloshes and various wraps, in the "Tambur," or anteroom; and, having put on your most ceremonious looks, proceed through several rooms, unannounced, till you discover your host, before whom you draw up with dignity and fitting gravity, make two bows, and shake hands. Recollect that one inclination is not sufficient; and attention to these little particulars is very important. If there is a hostess, you parade up to her and make two similar bows, always preserving your gravity as aforesaid. You then retire, and are at liberty to seek your friends, with whom you go through the same ceremony.

If the clock has struck four before you arrive, you will infallibly be the last; for the Swedes are exceedingly, and I say laudably, punctual at dinner. I would they were so on all other occasions. Indeed, you may

make a pretty sure guess as to where there is going to be an entertainment, when you see several hungry individuals in white neckcloths and yellow kid gloves, wandering up and down outside a house a few minutes before four, looking at their watches with evident anxiety. On the church clock striking its first stroke they are gone as if by magic. Most of the guests are decorated, although the dinner may not be one of ceremony. However, all dinners are more or less so in Stockholm,—I mean, at all events, not given on any extraordinary or official occasions. The natives must sport their ribbons and their stars, especially the latter. Having received much courtesy, I felt compelled to ask a few men to dinner at a tavern, supposed to be a sort of “Phillips,”* when one of the company—certainly a person of rank and consideration—honoured me with his presence, and, moreover, quite confounded me by appearing with a great star on his manly breast, or rather, his tail-coat. It is maliciously whispered that some sleep in them. And why should they not? The miser puts his cherished bag of gold under his pillow; why should not the Swedish swell take his precious “north star,” if he have no wife, to his downy couch? Touching decorations, I have frequently heard a trifling but graphic tale having reference to the profuse distribution of the *Légion d'honneur*. It ran thus:—A beautiful little English girl, who was crossing the Channel with her mother, having received much kind attention from a French gentleman on board, was reproached for not having thanked the Frenchman on parting. “But he is not a Frenchman,” said the child. “Yes, he is,” replied the mother. “No,” said the child; “all Frenchmen have red ribbons in their coats. He had none.” If such was the girl’s reply in the years these notes were written, what would it be now, when every other man you meet is decorated? To return, however, to my dinner.

The company being duly assembled, the servant comes in with a tray, on which are small plates containing caviare, sardines, and other small fish, bits of raw salmon, cheese, &c., butter and bread in slices; this servant is closely followed by another with a number of glasses and a bottle of “brankie,” or Swedish brandy. The guests first apply themselves to the edibles, afterwards tossing off a glass of brandy. The eating, to an English eye, is, I must confess, rather a dirty business. Forgive me, ye Swedish gentlemen, who live at home at ease, there is a fork to each plate handed round, and one guest after another does not hesitate to plunge the same fork into a sandwich, for example, convey it to his mouth, and then put it back again on the plate, ready for the next customer, who uses it without scruple in his turn, and, to complete the business, probably wipes his mouth on the same napkin as his predecessor. There are several napkins folded up and placed one upon the top of the other on the tray, and the uppermost one generally serves several people,

* A Parisian restaurant justly celebrated.

each of whom carefully refolds and replaces it after having made use of it.

For my own part, unless I could by dexterous juggling or some great piece of luck secure a fork to myself, I eschewed the whole concern; nor did I like using the same glass as my former "brankie," out of which my neighbour, a very good fellow, no doubt, had just been drinking. All this may be prejudice; but not having been brought up to it, it requires some time and consideration to attain the habit. However, barring these little drawbacks, the custom is a grateful one, and I confess to having enjoyed myself in a decent manner; my bit of bread and caviare was held down with a mouthful of Swedish brandy. This brandy is not strong; it is of a white colour, and tastes like a liqueur. Every one having partaken or not of the above, dinner is announced, when the two principal guests are requested by the host to lead the way—I am supposing this to be a bachelor party—and the others fall in, two by two, and generally arm-in-arm, with a good deal of serious coquetting as to the order of procession. The guests seat themselves. Before each is a fearful array of glasses, significant of the work to be done; and in addition to a piece of ordinary bread, there is usually a thin slice or two of coarse rye bread, or rather, biscuit, which is greedily attacked by the Swedes during the pauses of practical gastronomy, and which to my taste is not disagreeable.

The dinner is gorgeous, the dishes numerous, and the cuisine intended to be French, but literally a very bad imitation, the food being mostly of a heavy, coarse, indigestible nature, with thick brown sauces of various hues, all with a dash of sugar. These are met with universally, and are to be as universally avoided. Every male and female eats with the knife, which I conclude accounts for the fact of all the knives in Sweden being so uncommonly blunt. The wines are of great variety, and mostly of good quality, especially the Bordeaux. After the soup, sherry and port are handed round; then follows a dish of smoked salmon, poached eggs on spinach; sherry again; then boiled fish and Château Margaux; then comes the beef, cut in huge slices, and made dishes, with various kinds of champagne, generally of a sweet kind, and Bordeaux; after this, sweets.

The Swedes seem generally to prefer port wine, which is certainly at variance with our ideas. In addition to the above, Madeira is occasionally produced, and at the end of dinner some sweet wine. In fact, both appetite and ardour is required, to say nothing of digestion. An alderman once wished for a throat a mile long, and every inch a palate; such a throat would be useful at Stockholm.

The drinking is prodigious,—in all respects equal to, if not surpassing, the eating. After each course the selected servant, whose sole business it is to ply the guests with wine, goes round the table and fills every glass he can; he is always on the watch, and no sooner does he behold an empty glass than he pounces on it like an eagle and fills it to the brim, almost before you have set it down.

Every one drinks with every one else, and the process of doing so is singular. Your *vis-à-vis* looks at the army of glasses before him, singles out his particular fancy, grasps it, and then, fixing you with his eye, calls out your name, or title if you have one, with a bow and a significant movement of the glass. Feeling honoured, you respond with a deeper bow, grasp your tumbler, which it should be, of the same wine as his; both glasses are then raised simultaneously and emptied; you then bow once more, and inclining the glasses downwards with a knowing sort of jerk, only to be learnt by practice, show that you have drained it to the last drop.

This is *de rigueur*, and a Swede feels himself insulted if you omit it; of course it is not necessary that you should have more in your glass than you choose.

As a general rule, however, you are expected to ask every one in return who has challenged you, except your host, who drinks wine with each guest, but is not required to empty his glass on each occasion; and the bold guest who dares to challenge him in return is bound by Swedish custom, which is law, to swallow twelve glasses of wine as a punishment.

Whether that social penalty would be a punishment to most Swedes is quite another question,—“evil be to him who evil thinks.” I cannot venture to answer it.

When dinner is over the last glass of wine is emptied by the guests, in honour of the Amphitryon, who responds, bows, and smiles his acknowledgments. If there is a hostess, she is of course included; and then the company rise from the table and return to the other rooms. Your true Swede then goes up to the master of the house, makes a formal bow, probably shakes hands, and returns thanks for the feast. Coffee and liqueurs are then brought in, and the guests retire very shortly after; though the business—for a heavy business it really is—is often prolonged indefinitely with sweet punch, cigars, &c., in the host's private room.

But on this, and its consequences, I will draw a curtain; and thus terminates a Swedish dinner.

There is still, however, one thing to be observed, the first time you see your host after the entertainment;—you are expected to make him a couple of low bows, shake him by the hand, greeting him with the words, “*Toek for sist*,” literally meaning, “Thank you for the last,”—that is to say, for the dinner he gave you the last time you saw each other; and within the week you are expected to call at the house.

BERTIE BRAY:-

A STORY THAT MIGHT BE TRUE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY LORME," "THE CROSS OF HONOUR," ETC.

"I was a child, and she was a child,
 In this kingdom by the sea;
 But we loved with a love that was more than love,
 I and my Annabel Lee."

CHAPTER I.

THE RISING OF THE SUN.

"SHALL I show you the sea?"

The questioner was a little girl of about nine, with a pale, sallow face, and dark eyes, shaded with something that might be sickness or sorrow, or possibly nothing but thought; a little girl, with a mass of fluffy, fine dark brown hair, hanging loose and disordered from out of her little calico sun-bonnet down upon a pair of narrow shoulders and a back rounded from a habit of stooping over books, and pressing her shoulder-blades the while against the back of her chair for greater comfort; a little girl with long, slim arms, in which bone was more freely developed than beauty; with long, thin, knuckly-fingered hands hanging down like yellowish-red ungainly tassels at the ends of them. A little girl altogether, who might fairly, if anything feminine may, be denominated plain.

The questioned offered a marked, almost a cruel contrast to this embryo swayer of *one* man's soul—for that, at least, is every woman. He was a boy of about twelve, a tall, slight, lithe, active-looking boy, whom not even the jacket of twenty years ago could disfigure. He had a fair—girlishly fair—and delicate face, lighted up by a pair of brilliant, flickering grey eyes, that were alternately soft as a woman's, or keen as steel, according to the momentary and most evanescent humour of their owner—a beautiful boy! the very type of a royal prince or a royal page, with golden curls, scented and smooth, hanging down over his high, aristocratic brow: a beautiful boy, daintily dressed, in a way that showed a proud, loving, elegant woman had attended to his toilette; a boy such as women caress and kiss, even in boyhood, in recognition of the Apollo-like beauty that will be his in days to come; a young lord of the creation, who learns betimes that it is his to throw the handkerchief wheresoever he listeth; a curled darling, with plenty of life and braver yand vanity and boyish pride and honour about him, doubtless, but with no one of these characteristics so developed as to be distinctly traceable yet.

They were standing, this pair, on the top of a miniature terrace, that was the northern boundary of a small but most beautifully kept garden. They had come out—he first, she shyly following him—from the southern entrance of a pretty, creeper-covered house, and were now standing together, looking over a sunk fence into a plantation of rigid firs and larches and stunted oaks.

And beyond this plantation, shut out from their view, lay this sea she had offered to show him.

“Do you have to get up early too?” was his irrelevant reply.

“No, I haven’t to; but I like getting up when the morning’s fine, and there is anybody new here to show things to—like the sea, you know.”

“Yes, I know. Oh, you funny little girl, to like to get up for *that*! I’ll come with you presently, and look at it, when I’m tired of standing here. You won’t mind waiting for me?”

His masculine arrogance came out in the request; his innate courtesy in his manner of making it. His little companion, away in the depths of her mind, recognized something of this; but no traces of her doing so were visible on her sallow face as she replied,—

“No, I won’t mind it. I’d rather wait than not show you the sea first.”

“That’s right; that’s a good little thing,” he said, magnificently. “I’m tired yet; that old coach shook me so, and I’m not used to getting up in the dark, and washing in cold water. I tell you what; your father should give us a fire, if he makes us get up before the sun.”

The little girl gave her head an impatient wave towards the east.

“The sun has been up for an hour,” she said, “behind a cloud somewhere. I like to see him rolling up like fire over the water sometimes; and I thought you’d like it too, when I saw you come out here alone. If you’re not tired, let us go down to the marsh bank now.”

She held out her thin, dark little hand to him, and he took it in his own white, well-formed, strong boy’s fist, and they went down the terrace steps, and into the shade of the trees, and away on to the open sands beyond, to look at the sea together.

So we see them first; she, the little genius of his life, who leads him on to look at the Beautiful, which, but for her densely dark and solemn orbs, would escape his flickering, honest, bold, brilliant boy’s eyes. So we see them first, in the hours of their passionless purity and childish innocence; and as we look at them, thus unsuspectingly linked together, the morning sun sheds his full radiance upon them—he the beautiful young favourite of nature, and she the unornamented casket of a God-gifted soul.

He waded ankle deep in the shingle; he hurled stones into the sea; he made himself muddy and wet; he followed with hilarious bravado in the wake of the receding wave, and came back with triumphant shouts at not being caught by its successor. On the whole, he behaved on this, his first introduction to the ocean, as boys are wont to behave; and she was content, but very silent.

She picked up a large curly shell after a time, and held it to her ear, while he shouted at the crested waves, and endeavoured to pulverize the sea-anemones. At last she called him, and asked him "to listen too."

"What does it say?" she asked, eagerly.

"Ba-um-oom-oom."

"No, it doesn't," she answered, petulantly; "it says *your* name and mine so clear; they come in sing-song, like the roll of the sea, but they sound like Maurice and Bertie to me."

"I can't hear anything like that," said Maurice, stoutly. "What should it say my name for, either? Besides, it doesn't know it; no more it does yours."

The little girl threw the shell away impatiently, and looked disappointed; her idealized version of the ocean roar in the shell had fallen flat; she felt that depression which acutely sensitive people invariably feel when they have been beguiled by their emotions into making a speech full of sentiment, whose sole fault consisted in having fallen on practical ears.

"Of course it didn't say Maurice and Bertie *really*," she presently explained, "for it doesn't know us. But don't you like to fancy things?"

The boy shook his head; he did not understand her in the least, but he thought it would be polite to say something, and it had been sedulously implanted in his youthful mind that he was never to lose an opportunity of being polite.

"I dare say I should—I mean—what kind of fancy things?"

"Oh, you don't know what I mean!" exclaimed the dark Bertie: "I don't know myself quite; but I like to look, and look, and look, till I see things quite different to what they were when I began looking."

"Ah, well, I don't," said the boy; "you'll go mad, and have to be smothered up under a feather bed, if you go looking, and looking, and looking, as you call it, too long. I've had enough of this, haven't you? Shall we go home to breakfast? I'm so hungry."

"So am I," said Miss Bertie; "I sha'n't see you again after breakfast till the evening."

She said it wistfully; she felt sorry at the prospect of this separation, though he had not heard the sounds she had heard, and though he scoffed at the sights she delighted in, and threatened her with immolation under a feather bed. *He* was evidently not so cast down.

"Won't you? Oh, you poor little thing, how dull you'll be! Why doesn't your father have you in the school?"

"I wish he would," Bertie answered, lifting her great brown orbs up to his free, merry grey ones,—“I wish papa would let me be in the room, and say lessons with you.”

"I'll ask him, shall I?"

"He won't do it, even for you, I know," Bertie answered, disconsolately; "he says I am not to learn much for a long, long time yet. I'm to run about, and get strong."

"Why, you're strong enough," Maurice said, eyeing her critically. "How long are you to run about? That's all nonsense. You're much smaller than me, but I dare say you're old enough to learn something. What would you like to learn?—Greek and Latin, and all that sort of thing?"

She shook her head, and shrugged her shoulders.

"No? Well, they *are* hard for girls. Never mind; when I see you this evening I'll tell you all *I've* done, and that will be just as good won't it?"

"Yes," she said, softly, "quite as good;" and she almost thought that it would be so, for she had already taken up her woman's part of bowing down before her inferior in intellect. He was so bright, and beautiful, and gay, that she felt browner, and smaller, and feebler altogether in his presence than she had ever felt before.

On the top of the terrace they paused again, and she ventured to say,—

"You *did* like the sea, didn't you?"

"Oh yes, very much."

"With the gold from the sun on it?"

"Yes, all right, I liked it, funny little thing!" and then Maurice Power and Bertie Bray went in to breakfast.

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CHAPTER II.

WHICH IS SUNNY, AND NOT SYMPATHETIC.

THE sunshine that pervaded every nook and corner of the schoolroom—in which Mr. Bray narrowed the limits of his own understanding by striving earnestly to widen the understandings of the six young gentlemen who enjoyed the comforts of a home, maternal care, and the strictest religious supervision (*vide* advertisements), under his auspices—was of a soporific nature. It hung in dusty gleams over the heads of the boys; it lured faint flies out of dark dens, and beguiled them into the paths of hungry and relentless spiders, who forthwith devoured them in gilded webs. It flickered feebly about an open book and grimy slate. It rendered tuition more odious than usual, and the state of imbibing knowledge harder to endure. And yet no thoughts of green fields and summery lanes, and hedgerows flaunting their floral sweets wide out into the air, were engendered by it. It was a sun that made the boys yawn, and Mr. Bray sneeze; for it was a hot August sun, under which Neapolitan ices and iced water alone could give pleasure.

Maurice Power had pitied Bertie most when the prospect of their separation for the whole day had been mentioned out in the open air; but here now in the schoolroom, in the sleep-engendering silence, or worse still, occasionally in the detestable educational buzz, he regarded his little new acquaintance with much envy; for that she was free to run about and

get strong, while he, the pet of the family, the heir of the Powers, had to make his head ache under the dusty sunbeams, and over something that had no meaning for him in Greek, and less when with labour and difficulty he had turned it into execrable English.

Considering how universally acknowledged is the truth of the axiom that we are all more or less influenced by our external surroundings, it is a marvellous thing that, amongst the hundreds who have compiled educational codes, not one has displayed acumen enough to make grace and beauty some of the ingredients. Our schoolrooms are bare, hard, and barren—angular, arid, and unidealistic; learning, or rather the pursuit of knowledge, is made an odious thing to refined young minds, very often, by reason of the lack of everything that can gratify the eye. With the majority, education, like religion, to be efficacious, must be grim and repulsive, hard to endure and hateful to look back upon.

Mr. Bray, Bertie's father, did not like teaching little boys; but he "did his duty by them," he always said; and so he did, Heaven help him, with a loss of a certain duty to himself. He did it not sternly, not harshly and rigorously, but with a certain patient, unfaltering, gentle, monotonous abnegation of himself, that would have been infinitely touching even to the boys whom he wearied, were it possible for boys to be touched by anything.

Had his lot been cast in the pleasant ways of life; had not the daily bread, for which he prayed with cheerful, humble faith, been his alone by reason of uncongenial toil—that was not entirely bodily or mental, but a dreary, hateful mixture of both; in fact, had things been other than they were, men who had known Bray at the university said, that the dreamer would have realized some of his early visions, and made himself a name.

In early life he had given—that fatal thing often to any real work being done—promise of a rare genius. He did not take a double-first, but he only just missed it; and his would have been the prize poem had he not wandered from his subject into daringly speculative and strikingly original paths of thought. He always in those college days got more praise for what he did and lost, than the busy, practical, earnest men who beat him ever enjoyed. All his failures were attributed to his strong poetical temperament and his exquisitely delicate organization; and no one cared to "vex the poet's soul" by suggesting that the rarest gifts flourish better under continual and careful culture, than they do on occasional high-pressure work.

He left college, and found himself indisposed for the Church, when an old Trinity friend would have given him a living;—"It would cramp his views, and cause him to check those aspirations after the great truth which were inherent in him," he said. His money had been spent on his education: his family trembled for his brain, because they could not understand half he said; and for his lungs, because his hands were thin and white; and for his fate, because—though he wrote a great deal

—the idea of publishing his effusions, and striving to make them pay, never entered into his head.

He scoffed at this latter idea when it was modestly suggested to him by the married sister with whom he had taken up his abode. "So clever as you are, Ernest," she had said, "a book by you would be sure to sell well, and you might dedicate it to baby."

Now baby was one for whose shortcomings he had made himself responsible until it reached the years of confirmation.

"My dear Agnes," he replied, "you don't understand! Till I can see my vast conception spread itself clearly before me; till my crude thoughts have resolved themselves into the perfect order of the noble thing my soul has imagined and my mind may realize, I will spare my fellow-men the labour and sorrow of putting it into print, and reading it. No, no, Agnes! trust me; we who think are sometimes of more worth than those who act."

To which Mrs. Barrington could not give that cordial assent she would have desired to give to any axiom of her "wonderfully gifted brother's;" the fact being that Mrs. Barrington's own domestic life would have been pleasanter if she had not been called upon to constantly keep guard over her worthy, respectable, mercantile-minded husband, lest he should "vex the poet's soul," not alone by his shallow wit, but by his well-meant endeavours to stir the young man to do something.

After a time Ernest Bray did the most foolish thing he could have done—he fell in love; and after another short time he did the worst thing he, or any other man with nothing to live upon, and no inclination to fight for a living, could do—he married.

Milton married a shrew, and Goethe a worse. Ernest Bray was neither a Milton nor a Goethe, therefore it behoved him to have been more careful in the choice he made. He was an impulsive, dreamy, poetically-minded, refined, clever man; and he married a commonplace girl, who was earnest and bustling, and gifted with a habit of looking to the future, and who insisted, on their return from the honeymoon, that he should "set up a school."

After one wildly plaintive protest against sinking the lofty faculties he knew he possessed in aught so debasing to the soul and intellect, Ernest succumbed to his fate and his wife. When once she had succeeded in settling him in the schoolroom, he never dreamt of leaving it; the old dreams he sought so hard to dispel, in order that, as Mrs. Bray said, "he might make some use of his brains, and gain a living for his wife and family" (she was a provident woman, and counted the family before it came), would hover over him at times. But those fair visions had been struggled against so long, that they were weak and faint now, mere ghosts of the dreams of his youth, indeed; for the man of thirty-four seemed to have left "youth" far, far behind him.

The only dream he ever had now was one of a future, that should be

bright with lore and love, and the literary wealth of ages, for that soul-fraught child of his, in whom he, and he alone, saw promise of high things to come. They had called her Bertie, for they had meant her to be a boy, and had settled that his name should be Bertram; so when the daughter appeared their purpose was shaken in a measure, but not wholly so, and they called her Bertie.

So now, when Maurice Power, the new pupil, after having careered through his lessons with a dashing haste, that rather blinded his compeers to his numerous mistakes, ventured to ask if "Bertie mightn't come into school, sir, another day? not that he s'posed she could learn, like boys, but because she was dull alone," Mr. Bray shook his head, and smiled gently on Master Power, in perfect appreciation of the veil that hung between the minds of the two children, and of the folly of attempting to raise it, even by using the words he did in answer.

"No, no; Bertie will never be school-taught."

"Oh, a governess, I s'pose," Master Power rejoined; "ah! girls do generally have that sort of thing—in spectacles."

In the mean time Bertie was very solitary with her mother.

Her morning walk to the sea had tired her apparently; for instead of going out in search of any stray amusements that might come upon the surface, as she was wont to do, after breakfast she had made a choice selection of light literature, and ensconced herself in the recess of the window in her mother's sitting-room, with the flower-laden autumn air playing over her head, and a heap of books on her lap.

The books were not such as usually delight a child:—a volume of Byron, containing the "Hebrew Melodies," all of which she knew by heart; and "Don Juan;" Miss Austen's "Sense and Sensibility;" "The Wandering Jew;" and a volume of the *Family Herald*. I am sorry for her; there was nothing else in the bookcase in her mother's room that she *could* read save the Bible and the cookery book, and she affected neither of these works; for, as is usually and judiciously done, the Bible, instead of being given to her as a literary treat, was made a task-book of, a chapter of which must be read every Sunday morning, to ensure the reader's going to heaven.

So Bertie Bray read "Don Juan," and Mrs. Bray worked assiduously away at the body of a dress she was repairing in silence for a time. At last she spoke: "Bertie, I won't have you sit on the floor, my dear; you'll spoil your nice clean dress; and I haven't heard you read aloud for a long time,—not since last Sunday. Now get up on that chair, and begin."

Bertie got up with outward obedience, and a mental groan for that she should be required to do anything so uncongenial as read aloud. Mrs. Bray was particular as to the reading; she ordained that it should be done with slowness and precision, and she insisted on Bertie counting audibly at every stop. The charms of the most delicious literature fade, and pale,

and become microscopic under such treatment; and Bertie, knowing this, abstained from "Don Juan," and treated her mother to a few paragraphs from a soul-harrowing and highly piquant sketch of Parisian life in the *Family Herald*.

Mrs. Bray was a good woman, thoroughly and truly good, and thoroughly and truly wearisome to her companions. She was middle-sized, and moderately good-looking; neat, trim, and active in her ways; after a bustling fashion that distinctly indicates a lack of any fine perceptive sense of the beautiful and pleasant. If she had been of a retrospective turn of mind—which she was far too practical to be—she might have looked back and said, "In every single action of my life I have been above suspicion, and blameless;" for it would never have occurred to her—why should it?—that blame could be awarded to a woman who did her duty entirely, and only made life hard to the finer natures about her sometimes, by being utterly unsympathetic to them, and only sulky when they could not come down to her level and sympathize with her.

"Now, Bertie, put the books away neatly, and go and brush your hair or dinner. No, I *will not* have them left about in that nasty, untidy way. When I was a little girl I always put my things away carefully when I had done with them; the consequence was, I always knew where to find them again when I wanted them next time."

Bertie put the books away, with the feeling that it would be better never to have them about at all—never to indulge in their dearly loved companionship—than to have them commented upon in this way. It was a small thing that she should "put her books away;" but it was a great thing, in its jarring painfulness, that she should be told to do so in the little cut and dried sentences that *always* had been used—"since ever I can remember," she said to herself, pettishly. The fact is, it grated upon Bertie already that when she was betrayed, even for a moment, into wearing her heart upon her sleeve, she should be powerless to prevent that same heart's being crushed with neatness and precision, and chilled with the cold, hard fingers of propriety. "If mamma would sometimes let me be!" she said, as she wearily plodded her way up to prepare herself for dinner,—“oh! if she would sometimes let me be, and not *bother* so about when she was a little girl!”

"That child wants to have her mind employed," the mother was observing to herself at the same time, with much maternal severity: "if she had some nice useful work to do she'd be far happier, I'm persuaded, whatever Mr. Bray may think. I'll set her about hemming some handkerchiefs."

And then Mrs. Bray cast a keen eye over her table arrangements, and then serenely seated herself at the head of the same, and "wondered why Mr. Bray *could not* be punctual." It has an ugly sound when a wife calls her husband Mr. to herself.

CHAPTER III.

SIX YEARS AFTER.

"AND then I shall be told to go round and shake hands 'nicely' with them all. Oh! I *hate* it. And then—"

And then the narrative was abruptly broken off through the narrator's losing her balance, and slipping off the tub which she had placed against the playground wall, in order to facilitate intercourse with Maurice Power, who, in company with five other youths (none of whom are worth further mention), was ceasing awhile from football in the aforesaid playground.

"Poor little thing! grazed your elbows, haven't you?" asked Maurice, sympathetically; "climb up again, and let's see."

"Ohoo-oo!" whined Bertie; "I've cut my arm. I don't care for the cut, you know, but it will show to-night, and I shall get a scolding."

"Who'll scold you?"

"Mamma."

"Oh, that's nonsense! the cut isn't on *her* arm."

"No, but she will say I had no business up on the wall."

"No more you had, you know," said Maurice, with that air of frank impartiality which is so infinitely aggravating to the sufferer on whom it is brought to bear.

"*You* called to me to climb up, Maurice."

"Ah, yes, so I did, because I wanted you, and you're a good little thing (you always *were* a good little thing) to do as I tell you; but, all the same for that, it isn't right for little girls to climb about and romp as you do; at least, it wouldn't be right for you to do it for any one but *me*. My mamma would scold you a precious deal more than Mrs. Bray does. My sister never goes out without a flunkey behind her, and a veil and kid gloves—"

"All behind her?" interrupted Bertie, who, in her intense interest in his recital, had climbed up on the wall again.

"No, no; on her hands and face, stupid—that is, I mean *dear* little thing. When you're grown up, Bertie, you shall go and stay with my sister. I shall take you there."

Bertie shook her head in a meekly negative manner.

"What! you wouldn't go?"

"Not to stay with your sister."

"Why not?"

"Well, when she came here, ever so long ago, she didn't seem to like me, and put up an eye-glass to look at me, when she could see—oh, as well as possible without it."

"Humph! that's her way; Frances is always rather grand, but she's a dear girl; and when I tell her to be kind to you, she'll *be* kind."

"I don't want her to be told," said Bertie, dreamily; "I don't care about it. You see, Maurice—"

"But, my dear girl," Maurice interrupted, seriously, "she's my sister, and so you must be good friends. My darling pet, how I shall miss you when I go to college!"

"Then don't stay in there; you *can't* care to play football to-day—it's so hot—any longer," said Bertie, earnestly: "come over here with me while you can. Oh, Maurice dear, you won't be dull like I shall be when you're gone!"

And then, as the handsome boy of eighteen vaulted over the wall, and lighted at her side, he condescendingly explained to her "that it was only natural that such should be the case;" and Bertie quickly came to feel that it was only proper too.

The six years that had passed since Maurice and Bertie had first met had ripened the handsome boy into a handsomer youth, but they had not done much for Bertie. She was still dark, and thin, and angular; still unformed in mind and manners; and still, to the eyes of the initiated, fraught with a clear intelligence that would one day bear rich fruit.

Fifteen is an awkward age under the best of circumstances; fifteen in badly made boots and unbecoming dresses is repulsive almost. The feet and hands have a habit of not knowing what to do with themselves, and acting accordingly in a vague and purposeless manner; and the head, where the health is not robust, is given to hanging forward, in a curve that has nothing whatever to do with the line of beauty. The meeting of the brook and river, except, indeed, under very unusual circumstances, is apt to be ungainly and unprepossessing.

The present, if it was pleasant, was always very much to Maurice; he could calmly contemplate, or calmly ignore, a great coming calamity from the standpoint of an agreeable moment: a thorough creature of the hour! Yet who could blame him for being so, since it kept him bright, brilliant, and beautiful, with a brightness, brilliancy, and beauty that falls not to the share of those who take much heed of what to-morrow may bring forth?

For six years Bertie had been his unfailing comforter, consoler, confidante, admirer, assistant, in every small sorrow, trouble, and difficulty that had been in his path. He was always certain of her sympathy and companionship whenever he elected to claim it; he knew that, if more congenial pastime called him from her one hour, Bertie would still be ready to pass the time of the next spare one he had in whatever way he pleased. During all these six years she had never shown herself either adhesive or exacting,—in other words, she had never bored him; and she had freely shown, moreover, that she loved him very dearly. And yet now his brow was radiant with the smiles that made his blue eyes flicker, and his white teeth flash in the sun, though he was going to leave her to-morrow. For the hour was pleasant to him: he walked in the shade of

the green trees, and felt the sea breeze, and was amused by his little companion; and the one soothed, and the other refreshed, and the third was, as usual, congenial and sympathetic to him. He was happily constituted he could take the goods the gods provided.

But Bertie Bray was not imbued with the spirit of this sunny philosophy. Here, brightened by his presence as that hour and that spot both were, fell the shadow of his approaching departure and her coming desolation. Very blank would be the seaside village, and the comfortable, tedious home, when he, who had been the light of her life for the last six years, was gone. She did not analyze her sensations; had she done so, she would have discovered that the one which gave her the keenest pain was the mixture of adoration for the hilarious boy at her side, and indignation and sorrow at the hilarity which could live under existing circumstances. He was alternately whistling and singing a bright, melodious Neapolitan air—even now, young as she was, there was a thrill at her heart in answer to every chord he struck—in a gay and debonaire manner, that promised well for his cavalier-like fascinations in the future. She could bear it no longer.

"Oh, Maurice, you *sing*! You are going away to-morrow, and you sing: when I shall miss you so!"

A something—the shadow of the feeling that would hereafter exist between them—flushed both faces as the child concluded her passionate appeal. A glowing, vivid, triumphant, pleased flush it was on Maurice Power's face, as he bent down and kissed the quivering lips and tremulous eyelids of his little friend.

"You dear little darling pet!" he said; "I think you love me very much, Bertie. You must always love me like this, remember; always be sad when I go, and glad when I come—I shall come whenever I can; and you must write to me very often, and tell me everything you do; and I'll write to you whenever I have time, and tell you the same; and——Don't, don't, my precious, darling Bertie! don't cry like *that*."

He might well implore her not to do so;—in the wild floods of tears that swept in torrents from the ordinarily self-contained girl's eyes, Bertie Bray washed out a good deal of her childhood. The brook and river were meeting in that hour of parting with Maurice Power; for there would be a tea-party in the evening, and she felt that the after-parting before people would be as nothing compared to these last moments in which they were alone.

"Shall you say it's the cut on your arm if they ask what you've been crying for?" asked Maurice presently, at the same time gently indicating that it would be as well if she wiped away the tears that were mantling her cheeks.

"No," Bertie answered; "but I sha'n't tell any one," she hastily added, "that it's because you are going, for I shouldn't have cried before them, I know; and it would be just as bad as crying before them if I go and tell them that I've been crying."

"Yes, exactly. Why, it's nothing, you know, Bertie, my going away;

most fellows are precious glad to get away from school, particularly from such a cursedly dull place as this."

"Oh, Maurice! don't swear."

"Well, I won't. But the place *is* dull now, isn't it? If it hadn't been for you, you dear little thing, I shouldn't have stood it so long. My mother would have let me leave, if I'd kicked up a row, long ago; but as you were here, and I was so fond of you, I thought I would just drag on till it was time to go to college."

"Don't you like papa, then?" Bertie asked; "I thought you must like papa."

"So I do, well enough; he's very clever, and all that sort of thing, but he's not a man of the world, you know; he's always half asleep, and dreaming. The fact is, Bertie," Maurice continued, looking as sententious as if, instead of merely reproducing a sentiment he had heard some one else express, he had evolved a conviction out of his own mind—"the fact is, your father ruined himself by becoming a tutor; he's not a man ever to have had much of a career, but when a man makes himself a *schoolmaster* it's all up with him."

Bertie had had a dim consciousness of something of the sort floating about in her brain, but she did not like to let the assertion pass without a protest, so she said,—

"How do you mean?—not that it's 'all up' with papa being a gentleman because he is a schoolmaster?"

"Well, perhaps not," Maurice replied, rather dubiously; "but—you don't quite understand such things yet—all up with him in the world. A schoolmaster has no social standing. Bertie, you're a clever little darling, though you're not pretty; you must make haste and grow up, and make a grand marriage, and haul your family up with you. I don't believe you could though, after all," he went on, pensively.

"Could do what?" asked Bertie, gently.

"Why, haul your people up; but that needn't prevent your doing the other thing," he added, laughing.

And Bertie Bray blushed hotly, and knew not whether it was for pleasure or for pain.

"It's nearly six o'clock," she said, after a little more desultory conversation had been indulged in; "I must go in, Maurice, and get ready for tea,—I must indeed."

"Oh, hang tea!"

"Yes, that's all very well; but if I'm not ready, mamma won't be pleased. I don't *like* to go in away from you, Maurice, don't think that!"

"But I shall think it, my pet, if you hurry away. Why shouldn't you stay out here and talk to me, as well as go in and talk to some horrible old woman or other? There always are horrible old women at your mother's tea-parties. What do they come for, I wonder? What

does she ask them for? They've nothing to say when they are here, except some rubbish about the edifying discourse they heard last Sunday, or some other wretched, uninteresting village twaddle. Oh, Bertie, you should be at my mother's evenings. She doesn't call them tea-parties, though there's lots of that, and other things besides; they always go like—like—bricks; they *are* jolly. I wish you could be at one of them; you shall when you're elder, and then you'll hate these tea-parties of your mother's worse than ever."

"Thank you, dear Maurice," Bertie said, half laughing; but on the whole, though this desirable consummation was promised her by such a gay and gracious young Apolle, she was not quite sure that it was anything to be very grateful for.

Bertie went in to dress for tea; went in, and up to her little plain deal-furnished room, where none of the delicate toilette arrangements were visible that make the time of dressing pleasant, even to very young girls. The glass widened her face, and made it appear of a pale green hue; and had, moreover, a habit of slipping either too far up, or too far down, for it to be a reliable glass. Bertie felt morally convinced that both sides of her hair were differently dressed through that glass's eccentricities. Bertie went in to dress, and to think out the sorrowful subject of Maurice's departure on the morrow; and Maurice Power sauntered back leisurely, whistling a few more bars of that same Neapolitan air, to the playground.

"Power, we've wanted you," he was accosted with, by a boy a couple of years younger than himself; "what a sneak you are to go off after the girl the last day, and bar us!"

"If you call me a sneak again I'll knock you down. What did you want me for?"

"No end of things. I say, though, you've spoilt that little girl of Bray's, so that when you're gone she'll be wanting one of us to be always hanging about after her. Now I didn't come to play with my tutor's babies."

"She wouldn't want one of *you* to take *my* place—you needn't fear," said Maurice, sneeringly. And then as he walked away the reflection dawned, that perhaps she might find solace, though not in one of these, in some one else eventually; and as he so reflected, Maurice Power felt his first jealous pang.

CHAPTER IV.

YOUNG SORROWS.

It was all over; Maurice was gone, and Bertie was left to live the life that was to prepare her for the hard future. It was not a bracing atmosphere by which she was surrounded morally and mentally; nor was it an ever-

vating one: it was dry, hard, drear, and chill; not one to render either her health or her mind strong and elastic, but one to deaden and stiffen both with its arid monotony.

How she missed the one bright beam of human sympathetic sunshine that had shed its influence—acknowledged, felt, and loved, and dearly prized while it existed; more dearly loved and acknowledged now, when it was past and over—on her otherwise sterile path! How she missed her father's pupil! and how she yearned for the day when he should return for a while, and dream away, or let her dream away, blissful hours in his company! The child did not know what she was feeling; she only knew that without him the sun himself seemed dark to her, and existence generally a bore. And feeling this, she drooped like a blighted flower, or weed, for her floral attributes were not numerous; and her mother said "Bertie missed her playfellow, as was natural; but she was growing up now, and would soon have something better befitting a young lady to do, than to go on moping about Maurice Power: for I mean to give her all the instruction in *my* power," she would sagaciously and maternally observe to any one who was listening. "Her father has some stupid theory about her education; but I mean to make her fit to do her duty as a wife. I shall have her learn the proper way to keep house, and make things go on well at home on a limited income, as *I* have had to do for sixteen years."

Poor Mrs. Bray held, among other fallacious notions, the firm one that she had made things "go on well," and that she was an excellent wife, because she perpetually interfered with the liberty of the subject in the persons of her husband and daughter. She was one of those estimable and by no means rare women, who are ready and willing to slave, and save, and strive for the men whose names they bear, but who at the same time are equally ready and willing to cavil at every plan or project mooted by the same. If Mr. Bray, for instance, made the rash assertion at breakfast that he should go out at twelve o'clock in the sun on the south side of the house, Mrs. Bray would forthwith elongate her face, and give vent to a subdued sigh, expressive of general disapproval of the walk, and a profound conviction that Mr. Bray would fall a victim to a *coup-de-soleil*. And if, when twelve o'clock arrived, Mr. Bray neglected to follow up his statements of intention by acting upon them, the signs and wonders in her heavenly countenance developed themselves more freely, and were even more hideous to contemplate. She also had a predilection for Bertie being smiling and gay, sorrowful and subdued, to order; and as Bertie was not a mechanical girl, gifted with an idiotic facility of adapting herself to the unidealistic whims of those around, who sought to make her so adapt herself, the result was that total want of all understanding and companionship which we so frequently see existing between the kindest and warmest hearted mothers and daughters, simply because the former will not, or cannot, be made to comprehend that the souls and minds of their offspring are too delicate things to be roughly handled by even maternal fingers.

And whenever Bertie held her own course, and read "Don Juan," for instance, when she should have been hemming pocket handkerchiefs, or did nothing when "Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs" was given to her on Sunday afternoons for her literary delectation—whenever Bertie held her own course in these important matters, Mrs. Bray sulked with her, and tried to be dignified, with the dignity of an injured mother, to every one whose evil chance it was to come athwart her path.

At such times—and they were very frequent—Bertie would pass through the phases of defiance, remorse, and utter despairing disgust; and then would go to her father, and hang round his neck, and kiss him, and feel sorrowfully, sorrowfully disappointed that he could do no more—or at any rate that he did no more—to assuage her, than give vent to his stock speech,—

"Be a good child, and mind your mother: she's only anxious for your welfare, my darling."

Poor Bertie! Who has not felt some such pang at heart as she experienced, when, craving for mute sympathy, she was met with unpalatable advice?

In time Bertie came to have a dim conviction that her father was a broken reed to trust to; that may be he had more need of sympathy even than she herself; and that it behoved *her* to keep her young trials in the background, in order that she might the better pour balm and oil into some wounds that, as scholar, gentleman, and man, he writhed under, and sought *not* to lay bare. In time she came to feel this, but not for a long time after Maurice Power's departure; and before the necessity of giving comfort to one who needed it even more than she did herself arose, poor Bertie Bray found life hard, and arid, and unprofitable to a degree.

There was one strong element in Bertie's nature that both her parents lacked—her mother totally, her father in a measure; and that element was pride. Deep rooted and intense, it lay, when she was a child, concealed somewhere in the depths of her being, and was a quality that her observant surrounders dreamed not of. But now she was developing, and it (to add poignancy to pain) was developing also.

Passionate pride and ultra-refinement are things that we should pray God may avert from our children, unless we are so circumstanced that these two rich and subtly delicate qualities can be guarded from the roughest of the world's handling. To go through the coarsest of life's highways bedecked in them is like arraying one's self in gauze, and velvet and jewels, to walk through the purlieus of Drury Lane or Houndsditch. They are always getting rudely brushed against, and vulgarly animadverted upon, and coarsely spoken of and used; and at every contaminating touch, till the sheen is gone for ever and ever, they suffer so keenly—so very keenly.

Bertie Bray was proud and refined, though imperfectly educated, and not at all accomplished; and she was "only" the daughter of a man who kept a school.

When we are the ones to draw the line of demarcation—when with us it lies to slander our betters by the diabolical repetition of an originally diabolical whisper, or blast the prospects of an entire family by asking mysteriously “if that little report has ever been cleared up?” or sneeringly, “if the grandfather of the individual on the *tapis* has ever been heard of by any one?”—then we give in our adhesion to the power of social grades and imperceptible distinctions and differences that do not, or should not, exist. But when other people draw the line, and place us on the outer side of the pale they have set up, then we denounce the social bonds that bind *us* down.

In the country, intellect being in a smaller minority than it is in largely populated places, “sets” are kept intact with a pious pugnacity that is truly edifying. There are the county people, the clergy, the professional set, and the wealthy land-hirers, or “tenant farmers;” and these latter, no matter what their individual claims to consideration, are voted collectively unfit for any other than their own society.

Now a schoolmaster, who did not amalgamate with his duties of tuition those of the cure of souls, belonged to none of these “sets,” and consequently was looked down upon by all with a wealth of contempt that increased in vigour and magnitude the lower down it came. The wife and daughters of the Earl of Mangoldshire, and the Honourable Mr. Wurzel, his brother, shook hands cordially with Mr. Bray when, on solitary occasions, the schoolmaster strayed to archery meetings, cricket matches, reviews of the yeomanry cavalry, and such like; and regretted, for full five minutes after parting with him, that his wife was so dowdy, and so palpably of the ranks, as to render thoughts of noticing *her* inadmissible; whereas the wives and daughters of the “professional men” (poor wretches who strove earnestly to make a comfortable living for themselves out of the feverish pulses and tongues of the neighbourhood) were crushingly condescending and bitterly sweet in their kindness whenever they did happen to meet. Only the farmers’ families were amenable to the advances that Mr. Bray never did make, though constantly urged to do so by his wife: indeed, it was one of her grievances, that when he was “asked to go out to tea with her, Mr. Bray wouldn’t go;” thus, she argued, clearly proving that “he was ashamed of his poor wife”—an enormity he might unquestionably have been guilty of without any great stretch of fastidiousness.

Mr. Bray might surely be forgiven for not liking those tea-parties, and for sneaking away from them as much as he dared. A tea-party in the country (at least, in that part of the country where Mr. Bray dwelt) does not mean the enlivening meal we know by the name of kettledrum in town. It means weariness and vexation of spirit in a stiffly arranged drawing-room, amongst a number of stiffly arranged people, whose angular gestures (if they be not vulgarly at their ease) and subdued tones offend those who are not cut after the same pattern, for an hour or two over a table crowded with greasy morsels of ham, and tongue, and bile-engendering

cake. "They were nice, quiet, rational evenings," Mrs. Bray was wont to declare; and "it was an extraordinary thing that Mr. Bray wouldn't cultivate such agreeable and thoroughly respectable acquaintances: he'd be sorry enough when Bertie grew up, and knew no one and went nowhere like other girls of her age."

To all of which Mr. Bray would reply *nothing* verbally; but his eyes questioned and answered a good deal as he turned them on his daughter, and hoped that at any rate she wouldn't, when she was grown up, go to and know such people as these who patronizingly asked him to tea.

"I hope," he thought, "that Bertie will never be driven by dulness to such depths;" and then he sighed, as he reflected how impossible it was to make enough of the eternally renewed "six young gentlemen" to place her on the heights where she would so well deserve to be. The reflection was a dispiriting one for a man who had never cared much for social triumphs for himself, but who would have dearly prized them for his daughter.

And she could never taste them! What earthly cause had he to suppose otherwise for one minute? No; humbly but very sadly he acknowledged that Bertie, who had learnt so much that was precious and rare without ever seeming to learn at all, would never be taken from under the bushel where poverty and prejudice and pride (the three all-powerful P's) had placed her. The germ, that he had always known was there, was developing and becoming perceptible to others now. The young curate of the parish trembled whenever he met Mr. Bray and his daughter out walking; and Mr. Bray was quite worldly-wise enough to know that the trembling was not brought on by awe of his lore. The sallow, dark, thin Bertie lost all these attributes, and became a glowing, impassioned, liquid-eyed, sweet-toned syren when she was in earnest or at all excited. Paternal pride did not mislead Mr. Bray into thinking her beautiful; but, as a man, he could not help being conscious that she was thrilling and charming.

And about the time other people had begun to coincide in these sentiments Maurice Power had been absent uninterruptedly (he had forgotten his promise to come) two years, and Bertie Bray had attained the golden age for woman, sweet seventeen.

CHAPTER V.

FRANCES' SUCCESS.

Mrs. POWER inhabited a *bijou* house—uncomfortably small, but uncommonly elegant—in Berkeley Square; she was Maurice Power's mamma, and she was a widow, with one beautiful daughter, Frances, Miss Power, —now on promotion.

The mother and daughter were sitting in their bonnets and shawls, just as they had come in from their five-o'clock carriage penance in the

Park. They were expecting Maurice, and Frances had prudently and thoughtfully suggested that the meeting with the brother—who would be sure to rapturously embrace her—should be got over before her filmy and fragile evening toilette was achieved.

Mrs. Power was a tall, slight, delicate-looking woman, with a small head and flat-featured face, that would have stamped most women as insignificant, but that never deteriorated from her remarkably distinguished appearance. She was one of those women who in youth reign as belles without having any personal beauty, and in after life charm by a certain effortless eagerness to charm that is infinitely flattering always to the one on whom it is brought to bear, until that one sagely reflects that it is brought to bear on all alike.

As she had reigned a belle without having been a beauty, so she had received homage from clever men all her life for being a brilliant, clever woman, without ever having done anything tangible on which to rest a claim to being so. No one could exactly analyze the motives which made each one bow to her influence, and cringe often to her caprice, but every one with whom she was thrown in contact did these things for a time. With rare calculation and finished effect she could be overpowered by her feelings, and be wildly enthusiastic at a moment's notice; and, the exciting recital or period over, no one could offer sounder, clearer, or more sagaciously practical advice than Mrs. Power.

Au reste, she always dressed well, and was never prosy.

Miss Power was an exquisitely feminized edition of the handsome boy we saw long ago, and likened to a royal page or royal prince; a tall blonde, with what might almost be termed a slender luxuriance of form. She wore her bright, rich, golden hair put back from her face, and massed at the back of her head, in a fashion that was not quite so common twelve years ago as it is now since Eugenie has literally turned the heads of all fashionable women; and she bore her head on high, like a queen; and was altogether as fine a specimen of a young, well-born English lady as can be imagined. Her greatest charm, though, was the perfect repose which covered her like a glory. Her quiet was not the quiet of a stagnant, stupid nature, but that which came from a profound conviction that few things were likely to occur to disturb the graceful elegance of the quiet of Miss Power. She was not interested in many things, nor did she profess to be interested in many things; she neither liked nor disliked warmly and well, therefore the current of her being was never disturbed by the woe or weal of her friends and acquaintances. She would have been prompt with the correct words and tones of condolence and consolation to offer to a bereaved family if she had happened to meet with them in the hour of their grief, but it must be acknowledged that the misfit of a pair of gloves would cause a more sorrowful shade to flicker over her brow than would the report of the death or disgrace of her cavalier of the morning in the Park, or at night in the ball-

room. Faultless in appearance, manners, and conduct, men said there was but one thing wanting in this lady, and that one a thing young ladies generally have apparently a superabundance of; so Frances Power's lack of heart must have struck some people almost with a sense of relief it might be thought.

"I hope Maurice won't be like most boys of twenty, mamma—intolerable," said the fully formed woman of eighteen, when a knock at the hall door announced the advent of the expected one.

"He is sure not to be. My boy 'intolerable'!—absurd! But even if he were, Frances, you are quite capable of forming him."

"Thank you, mamma; it would be a very tedious operation, so at once I decline the honour," she replied, sweetly. Then, rising, she awaited the conclusion of the embrace between mother and son, and then offered her greeting to her brother with a well-bred *insouciance* that struck him very much "by its perfect style," he declared afterwards, but at the time with almost disappointment that she should be so cool.

"There! I know you'll call me awkward in your own mind from this time forth, Frances," he said, deprecatingly, as he unwound his arms from about her form, after having caught a bit of her lace mantle on his coat button, and torn it; "and I've bent your bonnet too. What on earth did you meet me in your bonnets for, by-the-bye? How was a fellow to avoid crushing them? Why ain't you dressed for dinner?"

"We don't dine till half-past seven. Frances wouldn't risk the freshness of her dress being taken off by sitting in it so long. If she had gone up to make her toilette, you wouldn't have seen her till dinner was announced, and then you would have had to greet your sister, sir, after an absence of six months, before people."

"Who's coming?"

"Only Mr. Hope Bolingbrook and Sir Michael Blayne."

"A couple of old beasts!" said Maurice, hotly. "I beg your pardon, mother, but what in the world makes you ask men like that to dine with you alone?"

Miss Power raised her glass, and gazed at her brother; his sentiments did not interest her;—nobody's did, but his manners were passing strange. She was not accustomed to the sight of energetic epithet-bestowing young men in her mother's drawing-room.

Mrs. Power laughed.

"My dear boy," she said, "of what does your matured judgment disapprove?—their age? for that is all you can know about them. They are in the front ranks of London society, where you will be one day, dear boy, but are not yet, remember. You will do your best to play the graceful host to-night, Maurice, and—Frances, my child, it is time for you to go and dress."

Miss Power rose to obey the maternal mandate, and as she left the room her mother continued,—

"And you will reserve all opinions you may form on either Mr. Bolingbrook or Sir Michael,—before your sister at least, Maurice. I wish her choice to be unprejudiced; they are both aspirants for her favour."

"You don't mean to say you're going to marry that girl to either of those men, mother? They're old enough to be her father—grandfather even."

"Dear boy, how handsome you've grown!" his mother answered, rising and flinging her arms round his neck; "all my old, wild, impulsive enthusiasm lives in you. I see plainly my son will win laurels."

With which speech she left him, his judgment rather wandering, but not quite lost. Delicate flattery from such an elegant woman as his mother was a thing he had rarely met with.

"I'm evidently supposed to know nothing as yet, by Jove!" he muttered to himself. "My laurels are to be gained after a course of home training; as if a fellow didn't see more life in two years at Oxford, than a woman ever possibly can. My mother wants me home to look after Frances: that Sir Michael Blayne did a shady thing on the Derby once; they can't know *that*!"

Maurice was indisputably well bred; he satisfied all Miss Power's requirements as to what her brother should be, and she saw that he did so at a glance, and she acknowledged it by another to her mamma. He had made an elaborate toilette, in reality, but the effect was a perfect simplicity, that went home to Frances' heart at once, and made her almost regret that the days of youthful elegance were over for ever for the two smirking old men who stood posing before her.

"This is my son," Mrs. Power began, directly Maurice entered; but she paused on observing that such an introduction, as marking the difference in their years too particularly, was remarkably offensive to both the young Apollo and the wigged and powdered Adonises. So she altered her form of introduction to the conventionally stiff and unpleasant one, and all was socially smooth and serene once more.

"You're very sensible to cut Oxford for a time, and come up for the first fruits of the season," Sir Michael Blayne said to Maurice, when they had bowed to each other and returned to their normal perpendicular.

Maurice laughed a little, and blushed a little. He did not—or he had not heretofore—considered the circumstances under which he returned as anything but highly facetious and lively, but he now judged them more harshly himself, since he felt convinced that Sir Michael would regard them with a lax leniency that would endorse some reports Maurice had heard not altogether redounding to the baronet's credit as a man and a gentleman.

"I hadn't much choice in the matter,—that is to say, as far as leaving Oxford is concerned," he replied.

"Rusticated or expelled?" asked Sir Michael, quietly.

"Compelled to leave, at all events, and not expected to return," said

Maurice. "It's not a pleasant topic to ventilate before my mother and sister. If you'll excuse me, I'll drop it."

"Oh, certainly!" muttered Sir Michael. "Young dog shows his teeth fast enough," he added, mentally; and there was ill blood between the two men from that moment.

"My brother is so *young*," Frances murmured, as she crossed the hall on Sir Michael's arm. "Your breeding and tact are so perfect that you can afford to be generous to those who are sadly deficient in both. I want you to be kind to Maurice."

"And I want him to be kind to me."

"How can he? All the advantages of intercourse between you are to be gained from you. You can get him into a good set. Mamma's terror is that he'll go into second-rate society, if it amuses him."

"Second-rate society never does amuse a fellow," said Sir Michael, pensively; "that's the worst of it. The best is the nicest and most amusing."

"I thought actors, and authors, and artists, and that sort of people, were amusing."

"Well, one meets them."

"No! I never meet people who wear their hair long and their hands dingy."

"Ah! there are some very nice fellows in that clique," said Sir Michael, with that magnificent generosity which falls so gracefully from the lips of a mediocre-minded, and very, *very* moderately gifted man, with respect to those who live by their brains, in the highest, broadest sense of the phrase,—“some very nice fellows indeed in that clique, men that I shouldn't mind having at my house at all—not at all.”

"Unmarried men in your position can know people and do things that Maurice mustn't," observed Miss Power, with as much coolness as if she had not known she was playing her strongest card.

And then Sir Michael made a speech that proved to her that with herself it rested entirely whether the option of becoming Lady Blayne should be given her that night or not.

"The people I know now I should like my wife to know. I assure you Lady Blayne could do more for Maurice than I can."

"If your choice falls on one likely to be interested in him," Miss Power returned, calmly.

Sir Michael enacted emotion by apparently choking over a piece of bread.

"You cannot be blind," he began, "to my—that is, to my—"

"Blayne, could you find me a duplicate of that brown cob of yours?" interrupted Mr. Bolingbrook, who saw, by certain and unmistakable signs, that his own game was as good as gone, and who had therefore no very poignant scruples about spoiling that of his rival.

"I think not," answered Sir Michael, pettishly; then, *sotto voce*, "As I was saying, Miss Power, you cannot have been blind to my feelings—"

"I am sorry for it; for at our time of life," broke in Mr. Bolingbrook, hilariously, "such a horse as that brown cob is invaluable;" and then he patted the table softly with his third finger, and looked so gently resigned to his age, and so thoroughly respectable, that Maurice thought at once that his mother had maligned him, and that he could never have had any intention of contesting the palm for youth and beauty. The allusion was felt in all its bitterness, though, by the man who was trying to make May oblivious to his December aspect at the moment; he felt that his small assumptions of jaunty youthfulness must appear infinitely ridiculous to her, when looked at by the cruel light Bolingbrook had just thrown on his age. Therefore he balked the leap he had been about to take, and resolved to defer his proposal to a more auspicious moment; and Frances saw and appreciated his difficulty, and resolved that the auspicious moment should shortly arrive.

"Maurice shall sing after dinner, Sir Michael," she said to him, as if his feelings had not been on the *tapis* five minutes before; "and, as usual, I suppose mamma and Mr. Bolingbrook will play their dreadful chess. You'll only have me to talk to, unless some one else comes in."

"I hope no one else will come in, then," said Sir Michael.

"I hope not," said Miss Power; and as she said it she thought, with a slight feeling of chagrin, of how, to secure this contemplated *tête-à-tête* with the baronet, she had been compelled to refuse the earnest plea for admission of an "old friend," who had been "almost like a brother to her for years," she told people, and whose fraternal feelings lately, poor fellow, had made his heart ache more than was either wise or well. One backward glance over the past, in which his figure occupied a permanent place, —sometimes sketching her proud, graceful beauty, sometimes reading passionate, measured words, in tones that, "while he told another's love, interpreted his own," —but always adoring her with a palpable adoration that a woman never forgets —one backward glance over all this; and then, to do her justice, Miss Power was herself again, thinking of what she should wear when she was presented as Lady Blayne.

"Dear child," her mother said to her, when they were alone in the drawing-room, "have you anything to say to me?"

"Nothing, mamma, thank you," replied Miss Power.

"You are not acting in obedience to my wishes—my unexpressed wishes—are you, my child, in violation to your own feelings about—about anything?"

"Oh dear no, mamma!" Miss Power answered, with the very faintest air of surprise visible in her manner.

"Because," said Mrs. Power, embracing her daughter, who gracefully permitted it, "though I desire a brilliant future for you, it must not be at the cost of your heart. You are too young to marry without love. I say nothing—I mean nothing—but you understand me; you understand that my desire is not to influence your choice in any way."

"Oh, perfectly! thank you, mamma. Sir Michael Blayne has not asked me to marry him yet; but if he does I shall accept him."

Mrs. Power thought for a minute of her daughter's rich beauty, and of Sir Michael's false hairs, and worn-out mind and frame and morals; she also thought of Frances' lack of fortune, and his power of making handsome settlements; so she simply said,—

"Dear child! Well, do nothing rashly, that's all."

"Why? have you heard—I mean, is there a newer and more desirable *parti*?" Miss Power asked; and her mother comforted herself with the reflection that Frances would never suffer much, marry whom she might.

They came in—the three men—from the dining-room now. Maurice had detected his mother's elderly guests in their futile attempts at rejuvenating themselves in the telling of their stupid old stories; and had laughed aloud, like the frank boy he was, when they appended carefully to every anecdote they told, the statement that at the time of the occurrence they were "mere boys." And they had detected Maurice in his mirth, and had hated him for being that which they were not—*young*.

"Beast of a boy! thinks *I'm* going to pull him through the world," thought Sir Michael to himself, "because I choose to have a young and handsome wife, and can't find any one better suited to the purpose than his sister. Find his mistake, though, if he thinks *that*." And then he took a seat near the couch on which Miss Power had seated herself, while Maurice proceeded to turn over his sister's music, in order to find a song.

"Maurice has a lovely voice, if he'd only cultivate it properly," Miss Power said to Sir Michael. "You see it's exactly as I told you it would be; Maurice is going to sing, and mamma play chess. How can I amuse you?"

"Amuse me, Miss Power—may I say Frances? You have it in your power to prove to me that—"

"There's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream,"

broke in Maurice; "by Jove, I'll sing that;" and while he fulfilled his threat, Miss pledged herself to Sir Michael Blayne, and was happy.

Mr. Hope Bolingbrook lost his game, and withdrew; Sir Michael remained, to be congratulated and to ratify his proposal.

"Poor girl!" Maurice said, when he kissed his sister that night; "you're so awfully young, Fan., to marry an old—I mean Sir Michael."

"Ah! but I haven't young tastes," she said, laughing; "'love's young dream' is nonsense, I have always thought. I shall be very happy, Maurice, and I shall be called the luckiest girl of the year."

"Well, I don't care to watch the growth of your happiness; and I don't suppose you'll want me much either, just now.—Mother, I think I shall run down to-morrow, and see my old tutor, Bray."

THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1864.

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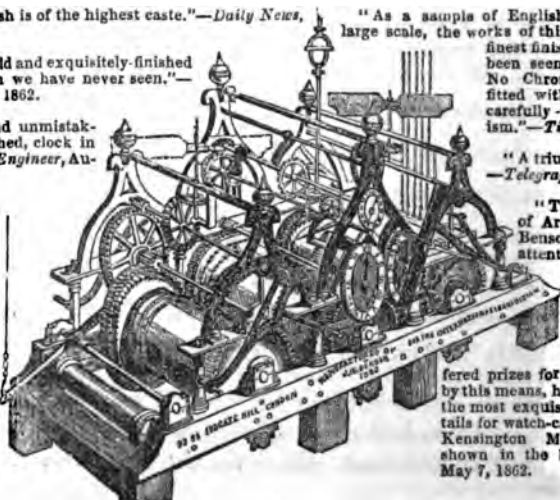
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THE MAN IN CHAINS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SACKVILLE CHASE."

CHAPTER IX.

SILVESTER LANGDALE'S NEW CLERK.

SILVESTER LANGDALE returned to his chambers in Gray's Inn on foot, and as he walked along the crowded streets he was perfectly oblivious of all that was passing around, noisy and perhaps exciting as it was. He was, so to speak, wrapped up in his own emotions; ambition was indeed now bright upon his mind. Why, in a few more hours he would be famous. He seemed instinctively to feel this. It was not anticipation—it was not hope; it was conviction, which the approaching reality seemed to cast before it into his soul. He walked along those crowded streets with a light and elastic step, and a light and bounding heart. His bosom's lord not only sat lightly on its throne, but throbbed in the excitement of ecstasy. Oh, how ardent is the hope of youth! It gilds success with glory, and decks ambition's crown with glittering gems.

When Silvester Langdale arrived at the door of his dingy chamber, he found three humble but enthusiastic suppliants there,—suppliants who had come in the fulness of their gratitude to beg the privilege of pouring out their ardent thanks upon him.

"Come in, Barnes; I am not sorry that you have come here," said Silvester Langdale, as he opened the door of his chamber with the latch-key. "Come in."

And Abel Barnes and his wife and their only son entered the chamber of the young advocate, who had that day so well pleaded the cause of the man who, stalwart as he was, stood before him tremblingly now.

Silvester Langdale requested his visitors to be seated, but they hesitated modestly. He therefore placed a chair for the woman, and she sat down respectfully. Abel Barnes, however, persistently refused to be seated in the presence of him upon whom he looked as his present benefactor.

"Might I be allowed to ask a favour of you, sir?" Abel Barnes inquired, almost tremulously.

"Assuredly, Abel; what is it?"

And the burly pugilist modestly advanced to the library table, at which Silvester had taken his seat.

"Will you let me, sir," he said, in a faltering voice—"will you let me, sir, take your hand?" and his big, broad chest heaved with emotion as he begged this honest favour.

Silvester Langdale put out his hand, and the man, grasping it fervently, carried it to his lips, big, heavy tears rolling down his brawny cheeks as he did so.

"Now sit down, good fellow, sit down," said Silvester Langdale, soothingly.

"We have been so bold as to come to you, sir, to thank you for your generous assistance in our trouble to-day," said the woman.

"And you are Margale's sister," said Silvester Langdale, turning the subject; "I was not aware that he had any relatives. When he was with me in the country I never recollect his having mentioned any."

"We have been a strange family, sir," said the woman, "and a strange history ours has been; and yet, perhaps, not more strange than common."

"Indeed!" said Silvester.

"For years past—long, long years—we have not known of each other's existence, and it was only by accident at last that we were brought together after so long a separation. He, sir, was an only son, and I an only daughter;" and the woman bent her head.

"Pray calm yourself," said Silvester Langdale: "I need not tell you that your story is deeply interesting to me; but, at the same time, if it distresses you to tell it, pray abstain from doing so."

"Distress me! oh no, sir," she answered, bitterly; "it is a relief to me, if you will allow me so to trouble you."

He motioned to her to proceed.

"You, sir, know how extensive were the mental acquirements of my poor brother. I fear me those acquirements, great as they were, availed him little, for in his youth I know that he was wild and reckless. But it is not for me to speak of that;" and she said this in a tone of self-reproach.

"He was most improvident, I know," said Silvester Langdale. "He lived for the hour, and cared not for the morrow."

"Too true," said the woman; "and not he alone."

"But how came you separated?" asked Silvester Langdale.

"We were idolized by our parents in our youth, and nothing was denied us that we desired. We were educated expensively—look at me now, sir."

And for the first time during the interview the woman wept.

"Never mind, old woman," said Abel Barnes, in a rough voice, but still kindly and soothingly; "never mind, let's hope for a turn of luck: who knows but what this gentleman's kindness to-day is our turn of luck?—And it's been a long run of bad that we've had, sir," he said, turning to Silvester Langdale.

"I wish to know the whole of your history," said Silvester to the woman.

She lifted her eyes to his, and said, sorrowfully, "Not now—not yet—perhaps never."

"I thought you wished to tell it me?"

"Of the separation from my brother, yes. The rest is a blank—a black blank."

"Of your brother, then."

"Our parents died, and we drifted out upon the sea of the world, where all appeared to us to be sunshine, and we never met again until three months ago, and the interval was more than twenty years. We separated in affluence, and with everything bright around us; we met again in desolation—the desolation of abject poverty."

"I've strove hard, sir, all my married life to get a good living," said Abel Barnes; "but luck must be born with a man, he can never get it without. He may have pluck, and all that there; but if he hasn't got no luck he must go to the bad."

Silvester Langdale smiled, but did not attempt to controvert the philosophy of the pugilist. It was part of the moral code of the prize-fighter's profession.

"He has always been kind to me, and kinder, I do believe, when he knew all that the dark blank of my life concealed," said the woman.

"I am exceedingly glad to hear this of you, Abel Barnes," said Silvester Langdale; "for, to tell you the truth, I have been led to believe that you fighting men do not as a rule treat your wives as men should do."

"There's plenty of very black sheep amongst us, sir; and when they are black, they're very black indeed. I've been unlucky, sir—very unlucky nearly all my life, but I never in all my life, sir, struck a woman, or hit a man when he was down."

"You are an honest fellow, Abel," cried Silvester Langdale, "and perhaps, as you say, this is the turning day of your fortunes. You have come here to thank me for my exertions in your behalf to-day. It may be that equal gratitude is due from me. Events in life are strangely blended, and if I can, believe me, good fellow, that I will care for you."

"Oh, sir, you have already cared for me enough," said the man, gratefully.

"What is your boy?" inquired Silvester Langdale.

"He gets a few shillings, sir, by singing in the chorus at one of the music halls," said the woman.

"Only a few shillings?" said Silvester.

"A shilling a night," the woman said.

"I think he told me that you had attended to his education?"

"In the intervals of our struggles for bread," said the woman, "I have not been unmindful of that."

"Is he particularly attached to his present calling?"

"I like it very well, sir; but I should like it a good deal better if I could get some more money for father and mother," the boy said, speaking for the first time during the interview.

"Which do you care most for, the money or the occupation?" inquired Silvester Langdale.

"Oh, the money, sir," the boy answered, hastily.

"How would you like to be with me?"

Abel Barnes clutched his son by the arm, and cried hoarsely, as though he were almost choking, "Severn, do you hear what the gentleman says?"

"Yes, father," said the boy; and then addressing the young barrister, he added, "Oh, I should so like it, sir."

"Would you like this dingy room as well as the brilliant music hall?"

"Should I be always with you, sir?" the boy inquired.

"Mostly."

"Then I should like it better, sir."

Abel Barnes patted his son approvingly on the back.

"You shall come to me, then," said Silvester Langdale.

"Severn, my boy," cried the burly pugilist, in a tone of delight, "your fortune's made. Only think, it was lucky after all that the old villain did break his neck in tumbling down stairs;" and then, thinking he had outstepped the bounds of decorum, he rather ludicrously turned to Silvester Langdale, and said, "Begging your pardon, sir, I didn't mean to say that, you know; but out of evil comes good sometimes, doesn't it, sir?"

Silvester Langdale was prevented contesting this point, supposing that he had desired to do so, by a knock which was heard at the door.

"Have the goodness to see who is there, my boy, will you?" said Silvester Langdale to Abel Barnes's son; and the boy sprang with alacrity to the door, and opened it.

"Mr. Langdale's chambers?" cried a voice, in a flippant tone, interrogatively.

"Yes," replied the boy, with a little hesitation.

"Are you his clerk?"

"No."

"Where is he, then?"

Silvester Langdale here stepped to the door himself, and outside thereof he encountered a young man, very flashy in appearance, and yet rather shabby in his attire.

"Oh, here's three briefs for Mr. Silvester Langdale, from our people; and precious sharp work we've had to get them ready,—only about three quarters of an hour to do the lot in. Can't say I relish this forcing system."

The speaker had clearly undergone a long course of forcing, and was evidently beginning to run to seed.

"You'll see that Mr. Langdale has 'em directly, will you?"

"I am Mr. Langdale," said that gentleman.

"Oh, beg your pardon, sir," the bearer of the briefs, that had undergone the forcing process, cried, in an altered tone, and taking off his hat—"beg your pardon, sir; Bluggett's case is fixed first on the list in the morning."

"Very good," said the young barrister.

"Good day, sir," cried the individual who appeared to have run to seed; and having made a profound bow with his limp hat, he took his way down-stairs.

Fortune was beginning to shower her gifts early upon the young barrister. If his visitors had known the nature of the communication that had just been made to him, how gladly would they, humbly and with heartfelt pleasure, have shared the delight which at that moment he naturally felt.

"Abel Barnes, good fellow," said Silvester Langdale, putting his hand on to the big shoulder of the pugilist, "you, as well as your son, shall change your course of life. I'll think of it to-morrow."

"Oh, sir," cried the man, with rough feeling, "I could put my neck under your foot, sir; and I'll show you yet that the character Lord Montalban give me was deserved by me."

"Did Lord Montalban give you a character?" cried the woman, in a tone that seemed to Silvester Langdale to be one of affright, or of strange agitation.

"Ay, my girl, that he did! and spoke up well for me too—didn't he, sir?"

"He did certainly, and he seems to have taken a sudden fancy to me, for he has invited me to dine with him to-morrow."

"Lord Montalban?" cried the woman, with a kind of gasp, and clasping her hands.

Before Silvester Langdale could remark upon this exclamation, Abel Barnes whispered in his ear, "It's a very strange thing, sir, but she is often took in that way when people's names is mentioned. It's her troubles, poor thing, her troubles."

And so it was arranged that young Severn Barnes should on the morrow become the clerk of Silvester Langdale.

The three then took their leave of the young barrister, who, as soon as they were gone, commenced to devour eagerly the contents of the briefs which the seedy young gentleman had placed in his hands.

CHAPTER X.

SILVESTER LANGDALE DINES WITH VISCOUNT MONTALBAN.

SILVESTER LANGDALE'S experience in dining out had not been extensive. He had not unfrequently been invited to dinner by the parents of some of the pupils at the school in the old street of the old city in the country; and although some of those banquets had been rather grand in their way—at least, some of the people who gave them thought they were,—still they were quite a different sort of affair from those which commonly take place in the purlieus of Park Lane. Some of them were homely and jovial, for they were held in the best rooms of big farmhouses, which, though they were not surrounded by great parks, with avenues of ancestral trees, beneath which browsed herds of beautiful deer, had glorious grounds withal, stretching around them,—grounds which every year yielded rich crops of fruit and grain of every kind, and about which, in place of the browsing deer, large flocks of stock grazed and grew fat. Others, again, were rather stiff and formal, not to say slightly stuck up; for they took place within the genteel circle of a genteel cathedral city, and the guests thereof treated each other with supercilious politeness, and a chilling warmth of ardent friendship, which is oftentimes softened down to amiability, if the dinner be a good one.

Silvester Langdale had never dined with a lord. In the first place, there was no lord in the old city to dine with, although there were several resident in the county, but they were only known in the old city as people who should be held in awe, and who were expected occasionally only to honour the city with their presence, and even then to flit through it like brilliant social meteors as they were.

Silvester Langdale had once dined with the Mayor of the city at his inaugural feast, and he retained a lively recollection that he did not enjoy himself at the banquet; for the citizens who happened to sit around him were rather impulsive in their feeding, and were almost ravenous after the good things on the table. The interesting citizen who sat immediately opposite to him was impressively stout, and peas being in season at the time, he had an unpleasant habit of shovelling them down his capacious throat with his knife, which in the operation for a moment completely disappeared from sight,—as completely, indeed, as if the man had been Ramo Samee himself. Then after dinner the stout citizen breathed so exceedingly hard, that the expression of his countenance became unpleasantly suggestive of

a sanguineous determination towards the head. He was clearly, however, a man of weight in more respects than one, as Silvester Langdale inferred from the respect and attention that were paid to him by those decayed citizens who were charitably employed as waiters on the occasion. Silvester, however, had no doubt about the matter when, the cloth having been drawn, and the wine and dessert placed on the table, the plethoric citizen was called upon to propose the toast of "the Sheriff." The stout citizen ponderously rose, and discharged the duty in a thick, unctuous voice; and his words rolled out greasily and wholly unfettered by those rigid trammels which grammatical accuracy imposes. He proposed the toast in a brief but highly complimentary speech, and he concluded by informing the assembled guests that "the gentleman whose health he was proposing was one as he was proud to know, and was a honour to the city, for he could say what very few could, that by his own exertions he had rose from the very dregs of society." Whether the sheriff felt gratified by this especial reference of his honourable friend, Silvester Langdale had no means of knowing, but he could not fail to observe that the good intentions of the plethoric citizen caused much amusement amongst his worship the Mayor and his friends around him.

As the time for preparation for the visit to Lord Montalban approached, there is no doubt that Silvester Langdale felt considerable embarrassment. He certainly felt far more nervous than he did when he went down to the court to make his *début* at the bar on the previous day. He was about to make his appearance in a circle of which he knew nothing from experience, and in which he might possibly have to stand isolated, as it were. This thought, however, brought a slight flush into his countenance,—not, certainly, arising out of a feeling of nervousness or embarrassment, but from that pride which places men of widely different social status upon a footing of equality. The passing thought that he might be received—not by his host, but by those who would be around his host—with the *hauteur* of patronage and condescension, roused that pride within him, and seemed to nerve him for his advent to a new sphere. He had assumed that there were to be other guests besides himself at Lord Montalban's, and yet he had no warrant for such an assumption, because Lord Montalban himself had said nothing about it, and of course nobody else had. Indeed, if Silvester Langdale had reasoned at all upon the matter, he would have inferred that the probability was that there would be no other guests, considering the manner of the invitation he had received, and the brevity of the interval between the time it was given and the time to which it referred. Silvester Langdale, however, had not reasoned upon the matter; his mind was full of glowing hopes and bright aspirations: the *début* of yesterday had opened to his mental view a brilliant future, and he was naturally dazzled by it; and so he had not, as probably he would otherwise have done, occupied his thoughts exclusively with the invitation he had received from Lord Montalban. That invitation had, so to speak, blended with the

picture which had opened to his mental vision, and he had from the first moment associated it with a brilliant gathering. He was invited to dine with a nobleman whom he had never seen until yesterday, and had scarcely ever heard of. His fancy, however, was not altogether in antagonism with the reality, for it so happened that Lord Montalban had previously invited a small party to dinner on this particular day.

The Marquis of Milltown was one of the guests; and when he was introduced to Silvester Langdale, he placed himself before the young barrister so as to exhibit his magnificently and artistically constructed clothes to the fullest advantage, and smiled inanely upon him. The smile, however, had just sufficient expression in it to indicate that the brilliant Marquis felt personally gratified in making the acquaintance of Silvester Langdale. He had seen by the papers of that morning that Langdale had made a brilliant defence for a fighting man, and had got him off; and so Silvester was a great character in his eyes in consequence, not so much because he had made a brilliant speech—perhaps not at all on that account,—but because he had associated himself with a pugilist.

"How d'ye do? So glad to see you," said the Marquis, extending three of his fingers to Silvester Langdale. "You managed to get Abel Barnes off, I see."

Silvester bowed in acknowledgment.

"Sorry I wasn't there to hear it," the Marquis was pleased to say; "but the fact is, Barnes has been so often licked that I didn't feel inclined. Sorry I didn't, though, now."

And the noble Marquis turned laughingly away towards a large glass, and became wholly absorbed in the contemplation of his clothes.

Silvester Langdale had never seen such a magnificent figure as that of Miss Montalban; and until that moment when he gazed upon her face he had never known what true and unalloyed female beauty was—at least, those were the instantaneous impressions that were produced upon his mind when he was introduced to Lord Montalban's daughter. That introduction certainly for the moment made him feel nervous.

The other guests were high and aristocratic, of course. There was a member of the House of Commons, who entered that assembly thirty years ago as a staunch member of the country party, had never swerved from one special political line, was a magnate amongst farmers, had gradually expanded in obesity, and from a county squire had blossomed into a baronet. He was famous in the House for a loud, boisterous voice, an expansive waistcoat, and a power of bellowing down a speaker which no other member could exhibit.

One of the guests was a foreigner, Count Moule, a tall man, of about forty years of age; very slight in figure, which was exceedingly upright and good; a sharp, thin face, and raven black whiskers, moustache, and hair. He spoke English with scarcely a tinge of a foreign accent. The most remarkable peculiarity, however, about him perhaps was his hand,

which was delicately white, the fingers thereof being rather long and tapering. While he was speaking, he exhibited a peculiar restlessness about the hands, which he seemed to move floatingly about, as it were. They appeared to float upon the air as he moved them, as though they were, in some mysterious way, self-supporting. You could see that they were soft—a softness that was suggestive of the paw, which at one moment feels like velvet, and in the next puts forth claws that are like steel.

The other guests were proudly aristocratic, highly connected,—some of them very rich, and all very insignificant.

Silvester Langdale felt perfectly at his ease in this, to him, strange company, and he scrutinizingly observed them all. At dinner he was placed between the Marquis of Milltown and a grandly made up maiden lady of fifty-three—tall, gaunt, bony, and evidently strong-minded, with a power and a determination to maintain the dignity of her rank,—she was the sister of an Earl—not frequently met with even in the circles of society that are up above. In the youthful days of this lady, however, Mrs. Candour had been very busy with her reputation, which, happily, being of a vigorous constitution, had flourished on notwithstanding. There was, however, but little doubt that Mrs. Candour had something to do with the celibacy of the tall lady seated next to Silvester Langdale, for she had frequently maliciously observed that men might marry widows, as they did every day; but for her part she also observed, that as a rule they did not much care about marrying a woman that was neither one thing nor another. And then she would laugh, and say that the world was very censorious truly.

There, between these two, the Marquis and the sister of an Earl, Silvester Langdale got on tolerably well. The Earl's sister was quite patronizing to him, and the Marquis of Milltown talked inanely about the odds at the Corner, a wonderful terrier that a friend of his had got, and a doubt in his own mind—which he hoped by great exertion to solve—whether he should start a dog-cart instead of a cab.

There was nothing particularly remarkable about the dinner, which was rich and elegant. When the ladies had withdrawn, the county member with the expansive waistcoat pushed the decanters along with great regularity and swiftness.

“Langdale,” exclaimed the host, suddenly breaking into a new subject of conversation, “I never heard anything more brilliant than your speech yesterday, and yet I am told it was your first appearance at the bar.”

“True, my lord, it was my first appearance in a new character.”

“And do you intend to confine yourself to practice in that court?” Lord Montalban inquired.

“I trust not,” replied Langdale. “In November I hope to make my bow at Westminster.”

“What, come into our House?” inquired the baronet with the waistcoat, meaning by the phrase “our House” the House of Commons.

"Not at present," said Silvester Langdale; "although by-and-bye, perhaps, I may spur on my ambition for such a goal."

"I had a couple of boroughs once," said Lord Montalban, "but somehow they seem to have slipped imperceptibly away."

"You were never half political enough," the expansive waistcoat observed, as he peeled a peach, and, first removing the stone, put the whole of it into his capacious mouth at once. "You always years ago thought more of field sports and the allurements of female charms than politics. Look at me."

Well, he was something to look at, certainly. His great round head seemed to have expanded under the influence of the wine and dessert,—for he was equally busy with both; but of course it was no ordinary supply that was required for the support of that expansive waistcoat.

"When I was a young man I swore that I'd be a kind of political pickaxe in the side of the reforming whip, and, ecod! I've kept my oath; and look at me now. I'll bet an even thousand this minute that I'll go down to the House, and from my usual place on the second opposition bench I'll put down any man—I don't care who he is—that is at the time speaking,—in what time shall I say?—in ten minutes. There now! I call that being a power in the State; but I could only have obtained it by beginning early. You, on the contrary, were gallivanting after boarding-school Misses at Brighton."

Lord Montalban laughed, and said Sir Timothy always was and always would be censorious.

"Censorious! Not a bit of it," cried Sir Timothy, with his mouth full of jargonelle; "it's all true. Only I recollect that it was the talk of our club twenty years ago that you had boasted that you would carry off three girls from a Brighton boarding-school in three months. I recollect also that you didn't do it, though; you only carried off one, but you said she was worth any three others, so you satisfied your conscience in that way."

"Ah, those are days gone by, Sir Timothy, never to return," said Lord Montalban, with something like a sigh, but in no way attempting to deny the truth of the reminiscence which Sir Waistcoat had favoured them with.

Count Moule, who had spoken very little, observed that he thought it might be taken as conceded that his lordship and Sir Timothy represented two different kinds of intrigue, which, however, he believed were very often combined in the same person—he meant political intrigue and amorous intrigue.

"I have been told that they are almost invariably associated, although, like all other rules, it has its exception, for have we not Sir Timothy here?" said Lord Montalban, laughing.

"And which is yours? or have you got them both, Count?" Sir Timothy inquired.

The Count shrugged his shoulders, and his fingers floated on the air.

He smiled significantly, but he made no answer in words to the query that had been put to him.

Count Moule was an intriguer, but in quite a different line from the two that had been indicated by Sir Timothy. His was a still more subtle intrigue, for it bordered frequently upon something more venal, and it had to do frequently with a passion in the female heart,—a passion that, when once implanted, grows imperceptibly; a dishonourable passion too, that flourishes sometimes in an otherwise pure heart; a passion that prostrates the will, especially where that will has always been unchecked and yielded to; a passion that exists and expands sometimes even where female purity in all other regards exists in all its chasteness in the human heart.

The Marquis of Milltown felt that the subject under discussion was either far above him or infinitely beneath him,—it matters little which,—and so he did not attempt to throw any light upon it at all. He was, however, struck with a novel idea, and he gave expression to it in these words,—

“If a fellah dresses to the point I don’t think there need be much intrigue, if he minds what he is about. So what do you say to our joining the ladies?”

The brilliant Marquis could not have made a more welcome proposition to Silvester Langdale, who, truth to say, was not much gratified by the tone of the conversation of those around him. It was sufficient to enable him, he thought, to judge of their characters. It was palpable enough that Lord Montalban had been a libertine in his youth, whatever he was now, and it required little discernment to discover that he was self-satisfied with his own antecedents in that respect.

Silvester Langdale found himself seated by the side of Miss Montalban in the drawing-room, near to one of the open windows that looked out upon the Park, from which there proceeded the peculiar hum that issues from a distant crowd, and which is more palpable on a summer evening than at any other time.

“Are you fond of racing?” Miss Montalban inquired of Silvester Langdale, rather abruptly.

“I have never been upon a racecourse more than three times in my life,” he replied.

“Do you hunt?” she asked.

“I never even saw a pack of hounds,” he answered, laughing.

“Dear me! where have you lived?” she said, elevating her beautiful eyebrows.

“I have been immured in the country all my life.”

“Well, you could not follow the hounds in town. You can have hunting only in the country.”

And Miss Montalban looked upon Silvester with an expression upon her countenance as of pity; perhaps that was her feeling.

As Silvester Langdale gazed upon that beautiful face—beautiful and

intellectual too, tinged, as it was, with an almost imperceptible shade of melancholy—he felt perplexed at the questions she had just put to him.

"I may infer, then," he said, "that you are attached to the sports of the field?"

"Ardently," she replied, a beaming smile mantling over her noble countenance.

"I have no doubt I should have been so if the opportunity of indulging the predilection had been thrown in my way," said Silvester.

"But you say you have been on a racecourse two or three times," Miss Montalban observed.

"Yes, our own racecourse down in the country," he answered.

"And where is that?"

"Sabrinster."

"I know it well," she exclaimed, almost enthusiastically,—"its beautiful racecourse, its noble country, and its gallant steeple-chase."

"Oh, I saw the steeple-chase there once," Silvester Langdale said.

"I have been three times there," cried Miss Montalban, quickly; "and as I stood upon that stand to watch the contest, do you know that I felt an almost irresistible impulse to jump down from it into the ring below?"

"Dear me! why?" exclaimed Silvester Langdale, in a tone of alarm.

Miss Montalban laughed, and said that Mr. Langdale looked as though she were really then going to take the perilous leap she had spoken of.

"It was the first time I had seen a steeple-chase," she explained; "and do you know that, as I saw that phalanx of daring horsemen come dashing down the course to take the water jump, my heart bounded within me, and I wished at the moment—what do you think I wished at that moment?" she inquired, smilingly, of Silvester Langdale.

The young barrister ventured to suppose that it was a wish that all the horses would get over the leap safely.

"Nothing of the sort," she cried, hastily, as though such a wish would have been puerile. "No, I wished at that moment to be one amongst them," she exclaimed, while her eyes bore sparkling evidence of the fervency of her declaration.

"You must indeed be attached to the chase," said Silvester Langdale, with almost a scared look, for the declaration had quite astounded him.

"The chase!" she cried; "yes, I madly love it. You don't, you say?"

"No, no, no, I did not say that," cried Silvester Langdale; "I meant to say that I have had no experience in connection with it."

"One so clever as you are ought to love the sports of the field. I should like you all the better if you did," she said, playfully, and, as it seemed to Silvester Langdale, tenderly and hopefully.

What is the matter with you, Silvester Langdale?—you who went through that trying ordeal in the court in the City yesterday; you who stood unabashed before the scrutinizing eyes of captious and jealous critics;

you who had so nobly achieved a great triumph, why do you feel a tremor now? why does the beating of your heart appear to check your breath? and how is it that you feel a flush of something like jealousy as the Marquis of Milltown saunters across the room, and takes a seat on the other side of Miss Montalban? Why, it is no novel sensation in itself, although it may be to you, Silvester Langdale, because that sensation is almost universal in the breast of man; it is felt and recognized the wide world over. You are in love, young man, as you will find before twenty-four hours have passed over your head; so madly in love that the object of your passion will sit as empress over that queen whom you till now believed was ruling over all your soul under the title of Ambition.

"The inane puppy!" Silvester Langdale thought to himself, as the Marquis of Milltown inquired of Miss Montalban which day she intended to go to Goodwood. "Because you know," he said, "I shall go down with you; and if I decide upon the dog-cart, I shall drive it for the first time in Goodwood Park. That will be something, won't it?"

"We intend to go on the Saturday previously," Miss Montalban said.

"Oh dear me!" cried the Marquis of Milltown, "how particularly unfortunate!"

"Indeed! Why?"

"Why, Tattersall's will meet on Monday, you know, and I shall be anxious to know if our friend 'Peeping Tom' rides easily in the market," the Marquis replied, twisting his moustache.

"Will you go to Goodwood, Mr. Langdale?" Miss Montalban inquired.

"Oh, I wish you would; 'pon my soul I do," interposed the Marquis; "and you can have a seat in the dog-cart, you know."

Silvester Langdale's mind was made up on the instant, and he recklessly promised that he would go.

"Oh, papa," cried Miss Montalban to her father, "Mr. Langdale says he will go with us to Goodwood."

"I am sure I shall be delighted;" and as Lord Montalban said this it was plain enough that he meant what he said. "By-the-by, that reminds me that I have received a note from Baskerville, in which he says he has got our money on 'Peeping Tom,' but at ridiculously short prices."

"Baskerville!" exclaimed Silvester Langdale, involuntarily.

"Yes, Mark Baskerville," replied Lord Montalban. "He is a friend of yours, you know, because he was the man who gave you your first brief, and introduced you to the world, I am sure I may say it now, the most rising young man at the bar."

Silvester Langdale scarcely heeded the compliment as he said, smiling,—

"I did not know that his professional avocations embraced that kind of business."

"Oh, you'll know him better by-and-by. Why, that is his chief business—that and money-lending."

"And a devilish fine thing he makes of it, I am told," joined in Sir

Timothy. "True spirit of a miser, I believe,—always brooding over his gold."

"I know him too," observed Count Moule; "and I think you are in error when you say that he broods over his gold. I believe that it is something else that he broods over. He is one of the shrewdest men I have ever met with; one of the cleverest, I may say. Yet do you know that I think he has a slight touch of lunacy?"

"Indeed! Why do you think that?" Lord Montalban inquired.

"Well, it may be only fancy of mine," said the Count, "although I don't think it is; and if I am right in my conjecture, it is that kind of brooding lunacy which, feeding upon itself, as it were, frequently in the end breaks out into suicide or some fearful crime."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Miss Montalban; "you do not mean to say that the Marl Baskerville who comes here sometimes is that kind of man?"

"It may be a mere suspicion of mine, a mere fancy," said the Count.

"I shall always feel alarmed when I see him," said Miss Montalban.

"Oh, I think you need not," the Count said.

"Well, I don't think he looks anything like a lunatic myself," said the Marquis of Milltown, drawlingly.

Probably, if the two had stood side by side at the moment, the conclusion with regard to the powers of mind of the two would not have been to the advantage of the Marquis.

The shadows of the summer evening have closed over the Park, and the curtains have been drawn. The drawing-room is brilliantly lighted, and as the night advances a portion of the party sit down to cards. Amongst the card party are Lord Montalban himself, the Count, Sir Timothy, the Marquis of Milltown, and Miss Montalban, who, Silvester Langdale observes, plays eagerly. He also observes that the whole party play for very heavy stakes, and that the Count appears to be particularly lucky.

It is late in the evening before they rise from the card-tables, and then Miss Montalban appears much flushed. They have risen earlier than they would have done, but there is an important discussion in the House of Commons that is to be brought to a close that evening, and Sir Timothy must go down to lend his voice to the Opposition, and the Marquis of Milltown to vote with him. And so they take their leave to attend to that sacred duty which their country demands of them.

Silvester Langdale finds himself again by the side of Miss Montalban, and they walk up and down the room. Seeing a small and elegant piano open, Silvester says he is sure that Miss Montalban is a lover of music.

"Why?" she inquires, with a pleased smile.

"Because I have been told that all who are fond of field sports are ardent lovers of music."

"I never heard of the association before," she said, "but in my case it is true enough, for I am passionately fond of music."

Silvester Langdale indicated by a movement of his hand that the piano was open.

"Oh, I am but an indifferent performer," she said, at once taking her seat at the piano, and running her fingers over the keys.

"Shall I play only, or shall I sing?" she inquired.

It is scarcely necessary to record Silvester Langdale's answer, or the tone in which it was given; agreeably with it, however, Miss Montalban sang an exquisite air to the following words:—

"The morn may break in brightest hue,
The sun may rise in glory bright,
Undimm'd by e'en a fleeting cloud
To mar the glory of his light;
But yet the noon such clouds may show,
And o'er that brightness shadows fling.
So we on earth can never know
The sorrows that an hour may bring.

"Then let us live prepared for all,
With resignation's solace sweet;
So that, whate'er perchance may fall,
The blow we may with courage meet.
To all alike Fate's arrows fly,
And all-unerring is her wing;
We know not, when dark care is nigh,
The solace that an hour may bring."

As he went home Silvester Langdale felt himself in a delirium of delight, and the cadence of that half-melancholy song rang in his ears the whole night through.

CHAPTER XI.

SILVESTER LANGDALE FORGES HIS FIRST CHAIN.

As Silvester Langdale lay in his bed awake the next morning—and he was awake early enough; as soon, indeed, as it was light, early as that was—the events of the last two days appeared to him like a glorious dream. Only in that short space of time he had accomplished, without any exertion of his own, that which some men toil through half their lives for, and even then do not always obtain the object sought. Surely there must be an inscrutable chance in all this, Silvester Langdale reasoned with himself, although it were idle to inquire whence good fortune—that which is really good fortune—springs. If poor Margale had not sent for me to be the witness of his death-bed scene, I might have struggled on almost hopelessly. I can see it; and no such chance for me might have arisen as that of Abel Barnes being arraigned on a charge of manslaughter. But that a man cannot be reckless unless he has a natural bent that way,

these strange chances of the last two days might make me recklessly confident as to the future.

Thus reasoned Silvester Langdale to himself, as he lay dreamily awake on his bed, arguing with himself, indeed, that he was not recklessly confident as to the future—congratulating himself upon the absence in himself of that recklessness, little dreaming in this waking dream that by so reasoning he was taking the first step towards that recklessness with regard to the future which he was congratulating himself upon having avoided: that self-congratulation was a delusion indeed.

The recent past was bright in the mind of Silvester Langdale, but it was not half so bright as that future which he could, with so much to justify himself in doing so, picture to himself; for since yesterday—since last night, something had arisen before his mind, and taken possession of it, which was not ambition, although it was something like it; but it was more akin to hope. The form of Augusta Montalban was present in his mind as something to hope for beyond his own ambition; something separate and apart from it, if it could be so. His ambition had suddenly taken a new form. Yesterday its object was that he should be famous in his new profession, an object wholly confined to himself; now, as he lay upon his bed dreaming, yet awake, his ambition was gradually assuming a new form, or rather a new motive, that of being really worthy of Augusta Montalban. And how fantastic is the mind of youth under such circumstances! Silvester Langdale was thinking over his conversation with Miss Montalban the night before; and already was he resolved, in order to gratify her, as he thinks, to become a horseman, and to ride to hounds, and to take an interest in the sports of the turf,—he who, but a few minutes previously, had been reasoning with himself upon his prosperity, and indulging in self-gratulation that his brilliant success, so rapid and yet so unequivocal, had not in any way led him to a tendency to recklessness. Why, all the impulses of youth are reckless mostly.

Yes, he has resolved to become a horseman, and to be conspicuous in the field; in fact, he is vigorously heating the iron with which to forge those links that shall form the first chain that, as a Man in Chains, he will have to wear.

For a moment, amidst the glowing retrospect and the dazzling future, as he contemplates them, his thoughts wander to the old schoolroom, in that grim old house far away in the ancient city, from which he seems to have been separated by a long interval of time, and he resolves that he will write to his old friend and protector and guide, with an account of his success, and the strange means by which it had been achieved; and he rises from his bed for the purpose, although it is so early that nobody is astir, and the sounds of passing traffic in Gray's Inn Lane are only fitful, and not in volume yet sufficient to drown the merry carolling of the birds that are in revelry, on this bright summer morning, in the big trees that were planted when green fields were all around them.

Silvester Langdale has fully attired himself, but he does not sit down at his desk, for, in truth, he has forgotten the impulse which had induced him to rise. He walks up and down his chamber, and as he muses thus he is again in the drawing-room in Park Lane, and listening to those words and those tones that have sunk into his heart, there to illuminate it with a brilliancy that it has hitherto unknown.

At length his eye rests on a thick brief that had been sent him the previous evening, and at the sight of it his old ambition—it is old now to him, although but forty-eight hours ago it was but dawning upon him—holds for the moment dominion over his mind. He sits at his desk, and untying the brief begins to peruse its contents, in which occupation he speedily becomes absorbed, and so the early morning passes.

Silvester Langdale had altogether forgotten the appointment that he had made to receive the son of Abel Barnes as his clerk, but the boy's father and mother, and the boy himself, had not, for as the clock struck nine, they, in accordance with the appointment, were at the door; and it did Silvester's heart good to see them. He had a kindly, generous heart; easily impressed, it is true, but sterling to its core. The appearance of all three was changed materially—the boy's especially, because he was in his new attire; and the father and mother were changed in their looks and in the expression of their faces. Their attire was unchanged. The woman in particular looked happier; indeed, she almost looked cheerful; and as Silvester Langdale gazed upon her countenance, he thought that in her youth she must have been exceedingly handsome; and then the thought seemed suddenly to strike him, as though it had never occurred to him before, that she was Margale's sister.

"What is your name?" Mr. Langdale inquired of the boy.

"Barnes," replied the boy.

"Yes, of course I know that," said Silvester, smiling, "but I mean your other name."

"Severn Barnes, sir."

"Very good; then you can enter on your duties at once, the principal of which will be to attend upon me;" and then turning to the burly form of the pugilist, he said, "And I shall see if I cannot arrange something for you, Barnes."

"I would go to the end of the earth to serve you," joyfully exclaimed Abel Barnes; and his wife added, "That I am sure he would, sir."

"Do you understand anything about horses?" Silvester Langdale inquired.

"I do, sir; I've had plenty to do with 'em in my time," was the reply.

"Then you can serve me, and I will tell you how to-morrow morning, if you will be here about this time. I cannot wait now, as the time for opening the court is approaching, and I have more business there."

"And them poor devils will be glad enough to see you, I'll warrant,"

cried the pugilist, with a lively recollection, probably, of his own feelings on a recent occasion.

Silvester Langdale smiled at the heartiness and the form of the expression of Abel Barnes; and then turning to the boy, he said, "You know your way to the Old Bailey?"

"Oh yes," replied the boy; "we live close there, you know, sir."

"Very well then; take my bag down there, and ask for the robing-room, and there wait until I come."

The boy took the bag with great alacrity, and, with something like pride in his new position, he prepared to go. Abel Barnes said he would accompany him, for it was all in the way home; "But," he said, turning to Mr. Langdale respectfully, "it won't be our home after this afternoon."

"I am glad to hear it," said Silvester Langdale; "it must be a rather melancholy place for you."

"It is, sir; but the people round, sir, have treated us very well, and it was your speech, sir, that did it all with them."

The man and his wife would fain have showered expressions of their gratitude upon Silvester Langdale, but the poor pugilist did not know how to frame them, and the wife felt her heart too full to do so.

Abel Barnes said he would be sure to be with Mr. Langdale in the morning, and in a few minutes afterwards the pugilist and his wife and their son were gleefully congratulating themselves on their change of fortune, as they made their way down Holborn.

In the afternoon when Silvester Langdale returned to his chambers, his new clerk having been sent on previously, he found Marl Baskerville waiting for him.

"The very man I wished to see," said the barrister, eagerly; "I dined with Lord Montalban last night."

"So I have seen," said Baskerville.

"Seen where? and how?" inquired the young man.

"Why, in the papers, of course."

"The papers! what papers?"

"The morning papers. You have seen them yourself surely?"

"No, I have not had an opportunity of looking at them to-day."

"So full of business already, eh?" said Baskerville, smiling. "I thought that would be the result. Well, in the papers this morning they chronicle the fact that Lord Montalban had a dinner-party last night, consisting of the Marquis of Milltown, Count Moule, Sir Timothy Wurzell, Bart., M.P., and Silvester Langdale, Esq., the new barrister, who made such a sensation the other day in his defence of a well-known character. Fame, you see, Mr. Langdale, comes in large waves when it comes effectually."

But Silvester Langdale did not hear this last observation, for he had seized the newspaper which he had not that day previously looked at, and was in search of the gratifying paragraph to which Marl Baskerville

had referred. He speedily found it, and he read it with glowing eyes.

"I mentioned the fact of my dining there the moment I saw you," said Silvester Langdale to Baskerville, "because Lord Montalban, in mentioning your name last night, intimated that you are in the habit—that is, that you occasionally—a——" said Silvester Langdale.

"Advance money? was that it?" Marl Baskerville inquired, with a meaning look.

"Exactly," said Langdale.

"And you would like to raise some?" Marl Baskerville suggested, as though he were speaking of the most commonplace matter possible.

"Do you think I should be justified in borrowing some money?" Silvester Langdale inquired, rather tremulously.

"Perfectly," Marl Baskerville replied. "You have got the ball at your feet, and the game is your own."

"And you will do it for me?"

"Nay, I did not say that."

Silvester Langdale's countenance fell.

"Did Lord Montalban tell you that I advance money myself?" Baskerville inquired of Langdale.

"He did."

"He was in error, then,—an error which people are very apt to fall into."

Silvester Langdale felt humiliated,—not so much at having intimated his necessities to Marl Baskerville, as at having made that intimation, as he thought, fruitlessly. Marl Baskerville sat with his back to the window of the chamber, so that the light should fall full upon the countenance of the young man, and not upon his own. Those who knew him well said that he always did this when in consultation with any one upon matters of business. He would seem to have read at a glance what was passing in the mind of Silvester Langdale, and he said,—

"He was in error in saying that I do this myself, although it is true enough that I am the means by which it is frequently done."

Silvester Langdale's countenance brightened.

"And I have no doubt that I can be the means of doing it in your case, Mr. Langdale."

Silvester Langdale's countenance was full of glowing anticipation again.

"What amount do you require?" Marl Baskerville inquired.

"You think that I shall get plenty of business, don't you?" Silvester Langdale asked.

"I am convinced of it."

"Well, then, in November I may reasonably calculate upon being in ample funds?"

"I think you may."

"Under those circumstances, then, it will scarcely be considered unreasonable or extravagant that I should require three hundred pounds."

As he said this Silvester Langdale looked eagerly into the countenance of Marl Baskerville, to see if he could discover what impression the statement of his requirements had made. But much older men than he in the ways of the world had failed to read impressions in Marl Baskerville's countenance, even when the light was shining accidentally fully upon it, which it was not doing now.

"I think you may, considering your prospects, reasonably borrow that sum," said Marl Baskerville, in a measured tone, and in a voice that seemed impervious to emotion.

"And may I ask you to give me your assistance, Mr. Baskerville?"

"I need not tell you, Mr. Langdale," said Baskerville, "that I never do anything upon impulse. My course of life is purely one of hard business; I do nothing except as business. But in your case I confess to something just outside the pale of business,—a feeling which I cannot explain or describe. In short, it is one of confidence in your prospects. The proof of that confidence is easily shown. By a remarkable coincidence I happen to have about me the exact sum that you require, for I was on my way to execute a commission to that amount for Lord Montalban. [This was not true.] I can do it as well in the morning as this evening. Till November, you say?"

"Till November, when you know the courts at Westminster will commence their sittings."

"It is now July;—that is three months, then," said Baskerville.

Silvester Langdale did not trouble himself to make the calculation, but at once answered,—

"Yes."

"You have not got a bill stamp, I suppose?"

"No, I have not," said Silvester Langdale, laughing. "I never had such a thing in my life."

"And I don't think I have got one," said Marl Baskerville, unconcernedly, and looking into his pocket-book. "Oh, here is one: shall I draw the bill?"

"Do so, if you please."

And Marl Baskerville drew up the binding document, saying,—

"I draw it, you know, for £350,"—at the same time taking notes to the extent of £300 out of the book.

It was that morning that, while lying in bed, Silvester Langdale had congratulated himself upon not being reckless as to the future, and yet he signed this document without thought, and by his signature struck a blow that clenched the binding link of the first chain that was to coil around him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE YOUNG BARRISTER TAKES ABEL BARNES INTO HIS CONFIDENCE AND HIS SERVICE.—SEVERN BARNES IS HEARD A LITTLE MORE CONSPICUOUSLY IN THIS HISTORY.

SILVESTER LANGDALE in his early life had had but little money, of course; indeed, he had not required much. The household of old Nicholas Darvill was a very simple one; its wants were few, and anything approaching to extravagance was unknown within it. Langdale, as we have already said, had been studious in his youth, and had not mixed much in the society which the old cathedral town afforded. He was, therefore, not very much experienced in the ways of the world, and yet now that he had arrived in London, and was moving in its great vortex, he seemed intuitively to be experienced in some of its courses. In fact, he appeared to have been suddenly transformed from the obscure position of a pupil usher in an obscure school far away down in the country, to something like a man of the world, and one apparently acquainted with its intricacies. This, however, was not the reality, because he was as yet wholly unacquainted with the devious paths of the great world, although he had been dazzled, as it were, into a kind of confidence with regard to them. He was very sanguine as to the future, of course, but surely there could be no stronger proof of his inexperience of the ways of the world than his being at that moment in possession of three hundred pounds, considering the channel and the means by which that sum had been obtained. If the possession of the money had not engendered a feeling of recklessness in his mind, it had produced something that was very much like it. Although he had never previously been possessed of such a sum of money, yet he acted and planned in his mind as though he had been accustomed to wealth and its disposal. If he did not actually reason with himself that he had opened up a golden mine that was probably inexhaustible, yet did he seem to treat with himself, as it were, as if such had been the case. He rose the next morning after his transaction with Baskerville considerably altered in his feelings. In fact, the events of the three days last past had changed him much,—not in appearance, but with regard to his aspirations and his hopes. He felt that he was no longer a dreamer; a bright reality was at his feet. And then he looked around him, and was much dissatisfied with his chambers and their locality. This must be the first outward change that he must effect, and so his thoughts wandered towards the Temple Gardens, and he resolved that his footsteps should wander there also as speedily as possible. He was a friend of Lord Montalban's, and he could scarcely ask his noble friend to visit him at Gray's Inn; and he felt a slight flush upon his forehead as the thought suggested itself to his mind of having to give Miss Montalban his

present address. And how suggestive was the name of Augusta Mont-alban ! The prospects which were opening upon him would justify him in the endeavour to gain her approbation and applause in Rotten Row, and ultimately in the hunting-field. For that approbation and applause he would dare the perils of the new accomplishment, and—well thought of !—Abel Barnes was coming that morning. He was well acquainted with horses, and he should purchase one for him, and become his master of the horse. Such a man would be an acquisition to him in more ways than one. Yes, he would create an office for Abel Barnes, so that the man might be constantly near him. Abel Barnes was a good fellow, he knew, and he would befriend him.

Such were the thoughts that were passing almost feverishly through the mind of Silvester Langdale as he was dressing on the morning after his monetary transaction with Marl Baskerville, and they were only partially interrupted by the arrival of Severn Barnes at the appointed time for the commencement of his duties.

"Has your father come with you?" Silvester Langdale inquired of his juvenile clerk.

"He will be here almost directly, sir. He has been helping mother to get into our new place;—not that it will take him long, sir, for we haven't got much to move," said the boy, with a smile.

"He told me yesterday, I think, did he not, that he has had something to do with horses?" Langdale inquired.

"Oh yes, sir, he has had a good deal to do with them; in fact, sometimes, when the Derby or the St. Leger is on, he gets some very good pay by going to watch the favourites."

"Watch the favourites? how do you mean?" inquired Silvester Langdale, in a tone of surprise.

"Why, you see, sir, those horses are not always safe in their stables, and so they are obliged to be watched by those who can keep guard over them, and protect them. And if anybody attempted to get into the stable, they'd find father rather an awkward customer, wouldn't they, sir? especially as he has a tremendous big stick for such occasions."

"Oh, that's what I have read of, then, in the newspapers, when great races—in which I take no interest myself—have to come off. I dare say your father has had some experience of the villainies that are practised in that vicious and degraded circle."

"I am sure he has, sir, for he used to make us laugh at some of his adventures when he came home from watching the stables."

This was not exactly what Silvester Langdale meant.

"He used to tell us how the nobblers, as they are called, would try to evade him, and watch their opportunity when they thought he was off his guard,—he watching all the time; and how he would pounce upon them, and thrash them until they roared again. It must have been prime fun, sir, mustn't it?"

Silvester Langdale could scarcely tell why, but he laughed at what the boy said ; and the boy would probably have continued his reference to his father's reminiscences if he had not been prevented by a knock at the door ; upon hearing which he said,—

"This is father, I dare say, sir."

And it was Abel Barnes, who, though still attired in his rough and shabby clothes, looked much improved, even from yesterday, in his face. He had a cheery smile, and the careworn look which he exhibited when Silvester Langdale first saw him was gone, and in its place there was a hopeful expression. He said he had attended upon his honour according to appointment.

"Take a seat, Barnes," said Silvester Langdale.

"Your honour's very good and kind, sir, but I can stand. I don't think I ought to sit in your honour's presence."

"Nonsense, man !" said Silvester Langdale, laughing ; "sit down, I have got a good deal to say to you."

"Very well, if your honour insists ; but it would be a pretty long spell of standing as would tire Abel Barnes, I'm a-thinking."

"Well, I suppose you are pretty well used to standing up ;" and Silvester Langdale laughed knowingly.

"It's many a stand up as I've had, sir, it's true," replied Barnes ; "but after all, what good is it ? It ain't often as it makes a man much better, and I'm sure it's very often as it makes a man a good deal worse."

"You of course know a good deal about the men in your"—profession, Silvester Langdale was going to say, but a sense of the ludicrous prevented him, and so he substituted the word—"line ?"

"Well, sir, I've seen as much of them as most men, and I think I know them all."

"And what sort of men are they really ? I mean——" and Silvester Langdale hesitated, for he scarcely knew how to convey his meaning to the man before him. "I mean, what are they morally or intellectually ? Are they bad men, or are they, considering their line of life, as good as others ?"

For a moment Abel Barnes looked puzzled, and then said,—

"Some of 'em are very queer indeed, sir ; perhaps I might say that some of them are very bad indeed, and not be far out in what I did say."

"Are they a very ignorant class of men generally ?"

"That's where it is, you see, sir. Some of 'em are very so-so in that way, very ; and do you know, sir, that I've always noticed that where a man has got his head screwed on the right way, and has had a bit of learning, he always makes a better fighter than the man as can't read nor write ? and nearly all of 'em can't."

"I can easily understand that," said Silvester Langdale ; "even in such a calling as yours is, intelligence must be of advantage."

"Such a calling as mine is, you said, sir?"

"Yes."

"Beg your pardon, sir, will you kindly correct that, and say, such as mine was?"

Silvester Langdale laughed, and said he was very glad to be able to make the correction as suggested.

"And that reminds me that we may as well change the subject, and discuss the object I had in view in requesting you to be here this morning. You told me yesterday that you understood horses."

"That I do well, sir."

"I want to buy a horse," said Silvester Langdale, in a kind of hesitating tone, as though he had not as yet quite taken himself into his own confidence, or it was some faint whisper of discretion or prudence that checked the flow of the words in which he had just made the declaration to Abel Barnes. No matter, the determination had been come to, why should not the declaration be made?

"I hope you'll let me do it for you, sir,—that is, go with you to buy him. A hack, sir, for your own riding?"

"No, no," replied Silvester, in the same tone of slight hesitation as before; "a hunter."

Abel Barnes elevated his eyebrows.

"Eh, a hunter? I think I know a good hunter when one comes before me. And you go across country, do you, sir?"

At this question Silvester Langdale felt a great deal more embarrassed than he did on the morning that he made his *début* so successfully in his profession. In the first place, he was not altogether sure that he was quite acquainted with the exact meaning of the phrase, "going across country;" and to have questioned Abel Barnes upon the point seemed ludicrous. He therefore nodded his head in such a manner as to relieve his own conscience in the matter; it was a nod that might mean anything or nothing, although Abel Barnes took it to be one decidedly in the affirmative.

"Where do you hunt, sir?"

This was a direct question that could not be evaded, and so Silvester Langdale nerved himself up to reply,—

"The fact is, Barnes, I don't hunt."

"Sir!" said Abel Barnes, incredulously.

"I may as well tell you at once, Barnes, that I am as ignorant of matters in the hunting-field as I am of pugilism; but I intend to become a huntsman, and I want your assistance both in the purchase of my steed and in his management after I have got him;" and Silvester Langdale laughed as he said this.

Abel Barnes rubbed his hands in glee, and said it was the very thing he should like to do for Silvester Langdale.

"You want a thorough good hunter, do you, sir?" he asked; "well,

then, I know a friend as knows where to get a good one, and no coping or chaunting."

"No what?" inquired Silvester Langdale, in utter ignorance of what coping or chaunting meant,—whether those terms had reference to the bad points of a horse or the bad points of the persons who had horses to sell.

Abel Barnes was quick enough to perceive the extent of Silvester Langdale's ignorance in this respect, and so he explained that coping and chaunting were slang or technical phrases (slang and technical are sometimes synonymous terms) for certain arts and impositions that were practised by persons whose calling was the selling of horses.

"I know a friend who was almost born in a stable, sir, and he has had to do with buying and selling of horses ever since he could walk, and I've only to ask him to do the kind for you, sir, and he'll do it. I'll go to him this very day; he's at a repository in the City."

"You think you can depend upon him, do you?" inquired Silvester.

"I've been acquainted with him all his life, sir; and although I know he's up to every dodge that can be done in a stable-yard, and can take in anybody that's green better, perhaps, than any other man in his line, I'm sure he'd no more think of putting the double on me than he would upon his own father."

To men of the class of the friend to whom Abel Barnes referred, this, perhaps, would not have been considered conclusive as to the *bona fides* of the individual referred to, but it was perfectly satisfactory to Silvester Langdale, who said, "Very well, then, Barnes; will you go and see him this very day, because I want the horse immediately?"

"I'll go down this very minute, sir, and he'll tell me at once if there's a good un to be had just now in London."

"Very good, Barnes; I think you had better go at once. But, by-the-bye," said Silvester Langdale, recollecting himself, "I have not made the proposition I had intended with regard to yourself. I want to take you into my service, if you have no objection to enter."

"Objection, sir!" cried the pugilist, his big, burly face glowing with gratification; "as I said yesterday, do what you like with me, sir, I'll be your slave for evermore: and no more of the ring for me; and no more sporting of any kind, unless your honour likes it."

Silvester Langdale did not give an opinion upon this point, but directed Abel Barnes's attention to the subject of his duties, which would be chiefly to attend upon the young barrister, and to act as his messenger. The matter of remuneration was very speedily settled, for nothing that Langdale could have proposed would, at that moment, have been objected to by Abel Barnes. The terms that his new employer did actually propose he considered munificent; and when they were agreed upon he almost involuntarily exclaimed, "I've got a turn of luck at last."

"Now, then, away to your friend at the repository in the City, and let me know what he says."

But just at this moment an incident occurred which prevented Abel Barnes immediately proceeding on his mission. The chambers which Silvester Langdale occupied in Gray's Inn consisted of two rooms and a small chamber, which was little better than a closet. Between this closet and the chamber which was Langdale's business office was his bedroom, so that it was at some distance from the chamber in which Langdale and Abel Barnes then were. Just at the moment when Abel Barnes said he would depart on his mission to his friend at the repository in the City, a splendid contralto voice was heard singing the music of a popular ballad. The voice proceeded from the little closet on the other side of Silvester Langdale's bedroom, and the young barrister listened attentively, while Abel Barnes, with a gratified smile upon his countenance, watched his new master. Silvester Langdale stood listening to the voice, and did not speak until the popular ballad had been performed; and then, turning to Abel Barnes, he said,—

"What a magnificent voice! Where can it be? It cannot be a woman's."

"A woman's, sir!" said Abel Barnes, proudly; "no, sir, it's my Severn."

"Your son, do you mean?"

"Ay, sir, my son. Doesn't he sing splendid?"

Silvester Langdale said the boy had a splendid voice indeed, and the young man went to his room door, and called the boy.

"Was that you I heard singing just now?" Silvester Langdale inquired of his young clerk.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, sir; I thought that both the doors were closed, and that you would not hear me. I hope I have not disturbed you, sir?"

"No, my boy, you have not disturbed me,—you have quite delighted me;" and then turning to Abel Barnes, he said, "Away on your errand, Barnes."

And Barnes went away accordingly.

When he was gone Silvester Langdale said to the boy, "Have you ever been instructed in singing?"

"I've had a few lessons, sir, from the leader of the band," the boy replied, modestly, "and I learnt the piano for a short time."

"Who is the leader of the band?"

"At the music hall or the theatre, sir?"

"The one from whom you say you received lessons."

"Oh, I had lessons from both, sir,—the last was at the music hall, and his name is Spaltok."

"And did he express any opinion about your voice?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, diffidently; "he said that mine was the best voice in the choir, and ought to be well cultivated."

Silvester Langdale mused for a moment, and then said,—

"You will see the leader of the band to-night, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, sir, I am sure to see him."

"Will you ask him if he can make it convenient to call upon me some morning?"

"Yes, sir; and I am sure he will be very proud to do so."

"Tell him I should like to see him; or, if he would prefer it, I will wait upon him."

"I will be sure to do so, sir."

Another knock at the door! More briefs, and from the man—the old practitioner—with the parchment cheeks and the wry mouth. The sessions are very heavy, for there has been more than the usual interval since the last.

The boy clerk has returned to his little closet, to wonder what on earth Mr. Langdale can want to see Mr. Spaltok about; while Silvester Langdale paces his chamber with the firmness of pride in his step. Fortune is indeed smiling upon him, and Abel Barnes's friend shall buy him the best horse he can get. This young Severn Barnes, too, he must not remain simply a barrister's clerk. Silvester Langdale has at this moment several projects, bright in themselves, floating about in his brain. They are great and worthy ones, and he will dash into them impetuously, for wealth will be at his command now: has he not a foretaste of it already? and is not the sun of fortune shining upon him?

These thoughts are rushing through his mind, and in that rush there is no remembrance for that moment left of Marl Baskerville and the recent loan.

TRUTH IN ABSENCE

"WILT thou be true?" In agony 'twas spoken,
 With beating heart, pale cheek, and glances wild.
 Still in mine ear thy words of love were sounding;
 I clasp'd thy hand,—“I will!” I said, and smiled.

I *smiled*; but had I known what thorny circlet
 I on my brow was crushing, how storm-tost
 Upon a dreary sea of doubt thou'dst leave me,
 I might have *wept*, and paused to count the cost.

In olden time the martyr to his glory
 Pass'd amid stones, and blood, and scathing flame;
 And e'en the foe, at sight of that calm daring,
 Refused not sullenly a forced acclaim.

But the *home* martyr, in these days of freedom,
 Must bear his cross in silence, and unknown;
 Unseen the aching, broken heart, the teardrops
 That nightly water God's eternal throne.

Yes, I am true! though in these months of waiting,
 A blank to ear and eye, there comes no sign;
 I catch no shadow of thy kingly presence,
 No distant whisper that thy faith is mine.

Yet love is woman's youth; where that is wanting,
 The bloom, the light, the softness pass away;
 The evening shadows o'er her morning darken;
 Or, that once given, her night becomes a day.

O God, that art more merciful than man,
 Because Thou only dost our weakness know,
 Haste Thou the day when in the light of heaven
 The True shall flourish, and the False lie low!

KINGSWOOD CLARE.

ON THE BANKS OF THE AMAZONS.

WE who live in England—in the cold and bracing north—where yellow gorse shines golden, and where purple heather reddens; where white mantles of snow drop over us, and where in the sweet springtide the fields and the lawns grow bright with an emerald green, we can scarcely picture the lands that surround the Amazon; those deep, unfathomed forests that spread over a continent; those walls of living verdure, along which the river passes; those tribes of sparkling humming-birds; those butterflies, like gay flowers; those insects with jewelled wings; those radiant, bright-plumed wild birds that light up the forest depths.

Listen to the description given by Mr. Bates, of his own first entrance into the great forest confines.

He had arrived in Para, that bright and cheerful city, with its light array of white houses covered with red tiles; with its church towers and cupolas; and its clusters of waving palm trees, that reared their crowns high in the air, and were etched on the clear blue sky. Landwards stretched the forest; and seawards rolled the broad river, itself almost as a sea, with its miles of outstretched breadth.*

After traversing the few streets of tall and gloomy buildings, along which idle soldiers loitered, and women went with red water jars, while monks in their black robes passed, and here and there Indian women were seen amidst the throng, with their naked children perched upon their hips, the travellers went down a long, narrow street that led towards the suburbs. Beyond this their road lay across a grassy common, into a picturesque lane that led to the virgin forest. The houses were low and poor, the lattice windows unglazed, and the streets unpaved. "The wooden palings which surrounded the weed-grown gardens were strewn about, broken; and hogs, goats, and ill-fed poultry wandered in and out through the gaps. But amidst all, and compensating every defect, rose the overpowering beauty of the vegetation. The massive dark crowns of shady mangoes were seen everywhere amidst the dwellings, with fragrant blossoming orange, lemon, and many other tropical fruit-trees—some in flower, others in fruit, in varying stages of ripeness."

Here and there, through the dark domes of the sombre evergreens, rose the slender columns and the feathery heads of the palms. Here on the taller trees were tufts of parasite plants; there were the cords and ribbons of the long lianas; while luxuriant creepers overran alike trees and roofs, and buried walls and toppled palings with their copious foliage. Here, too, were superb bananas in all their rich luxuriance—beautiful long leaves of glossy, velvety green curving over the roofs of the verandahs attached to every house. The beautiful shape of the leaves, often twelve feet in

* The river is in this part about twenty miles broad.

length, the charms of their varying shades as they moved to and fro in the wind, all conspired to add to their singular, graceful beauty.

Such was the scene that greeted one "whose last country ramble, and that of quite recent date, had been over the bleak moors of Derbyshire, on a sleety morning in April."

Now, too, began in his ears the ringing "uproar of life"—that deafening din that henceforth never ceased entirely, by day or by night, to be heard;—the noise of the countless insects—the roar of the forest denizens—the humming of flies and bees—the cries of the plaintive tree-frogs. The "ringing uproar of life!" and we picture the forest a temple of solemn silence. Even in the hot noon those woods still teem with life, and with the ceaseless murmur of its undertone.

The butterflies cease to flutter over the tall tree-tops, the wild birds' notes are silent, and the animals creep to the shade. On the banks of the ceaseless flood the caiman and the water-fowl half float, half rest in the noon, and yet it is *vocal* stillness of nature that reigns on all.

"If beyond the silence we listen for undertones, we hear a faint, continuous, half-stifled hum of insects, which swarm near the earth in clouds. Round every bush and tree, and in the very soil, there hangs a ceaseless murmur, as bees and insects labour there. We hear a voice proclaiming to us that all nature breathes; that life, in its thousand forms, swarms beneath in the dry earth, as well as in the bosom of the rooking waters, or in the soft, balmy air which breathes around us everywhere."* But it is mostly at sunset that the noise of life awakens; when birds cry in the trees, and monsters lash the waters, and hundreds of wild animals answer each other's roar.

At the falls of the Tapajos, with their lofty wall of forest, from which the crowns of palms stood out slender, and arched, and feathery, veiled in a misty curtain, and glittering with the dewdrops that reflected the morning light as the veil of mist rose up before the bright morning glare, the traveller on the Great River once made a few days' halt; and here, for the first time, he heard that noise of life described, awakening at sunset, and echoing in the night.

"The noises of animals began just as the sun had sunk behind the trees after a sweltering afternoon, leaving the sky above of the intensest blue. Two flocks of howling monkeys—one close to the canoe, the other about a furlong distant—filled the echoing forest with their dismal roaring. Troops of parrots began then to pass over, the different styles of cawing and screaming of the various species making a terrible discord. Added to these noises were the songs of strange cicadas, one large kind, perched high on the trees around the little haven, setting up a most piercing chirp. It began with the usual harsh jarring tone of its tribe, but this gradually and rapidly became shriller, until it ended in a long and

* Humboldt.

loud note resembling the steam-whistle of a locomotive engine. Half a dozen of these wonderful performers made a considerable item in the evening concert. The uproar of beasts, birds, and insects lasted but a short time. The sky quickly lost its intense hue, and the night set in. Then began the tree-frogs—quack-quack, drum-drum, boo-boo; these, accompanied by a melancholy night-jar, kept up their monotonous cries until very late."

But lovely as may be the scene in a tropical morning, when all the wonderful foliage is fresh from the morning dew, glittering with the rain-drops that sparkle in the clear light; sweet as may be the perfumes that rise from a thousand orange trees, with hedges of Cape jessamine and tufts of the fragrant orchids, we must not for a moment think that for beauty or for perfume, or even for brilliant colouring, those gorgeous plains can excel our own land's loveliness.

The buttercups and daisies; the hill-side clothed with gorse and broom; the mountain rich with heather; the woodland glades purple with hyacinths; the crab tree in full blossom; the lilac and the laburnum, and the horse-chestnut spires, will compare, we are told, with their choicest beauties.

The eternal verdure becomes almost monotonous; the long summer evenings and the social winter nights are amongst the many losses of lands that are always summer, and where night succeeds day so closely.

Amongst the infinitude of new birds, and beasts, and insects that swarm in these unknown regions, the many beautiful butterflies are even more attractive than the birds. Velvety black and green, and of delicate pale rose colour—again of vivid blue—some seven inches across from wing to wing when outstretched, they flash along in the sunlight, or gleam in the cool verandahs, or else in the forest alleys you catch their metallic lustre as they flit by in their soft flight many feet above your head. One of the most brilliant affects the broad sunny roads; and when it flaps its wings, as it comes sailing on, the sudden dazzling flash is seen some quarter of a mile away. Others have silvery wings, and others are spotted with gold; and the supremely beautiful *Hetaira esmeralda* has only one opaque spot of colouring on its wings; and this being rose and violet, the insect appears, flitting low in the gloomy forest, as if it were indeed a wandering flower petal. There is, too, a kind of moth, that both in look and action most closely resembles a humming-bird. Both poise themselves before flowers, and probe their tubes alike; and a similar strong likeness between a moth and the bird was said to be the cause of a stormy argument between Mr. Gould and a gentleman who thought he had seen a real humming-bird in the warm air of Devonshire.

But the prettiest picture of all was surely the humming-bird's bath—a little fairy creature washing itself in a brook. It was perched upon a thin branch whose end was under water, and as it dipped and bathed itself it fluttered its little wings and plumed its tiny feathers, seeming thoroughly

to enjoy the green nook that it had chosen, shaded by broad leaves of ferns and overarching plants.

When orange trees are in bloom the humming-birds gather round them, and then they are seen by scores in the cool of the early morning, and again at night, whirring about the trees, and darting from flower to flower.

The song of a small brown wren, that sounds like the English robin, haunting the walls and houses, is often heard sounding sweetly in the rainy season, when a few trees shed their leaves, and when the naked branches, and the soddened ground, and the scent of the dying leaves, combine with the plaintive song to bring vividly before the mind the English autumn days. This is nearly the only song-bird.

The cry of the harsh cicada, and the drum and scream of the tree-frogs, and even the very varied voice of the cunning jaguar, are at best most unmusical and little to be desired. The imitative jaguar reproduces, indeed, all notes of other beasts or birds; and at night it is heard in the woods, as it cries in its borrowed voice, and lashes the then silent waters, to mock the fishes' play!

The snakes do not seem to be so fearful as one fancies: their fear of man is too great. They slink away out of sight, as if they were somehow conscious of their curse, and shamed.

As far as torment goes, doubtless the mosquitoes are far more prominent; and even from them there are many places and bays on the Great River free; and rowers rowing up would hurry on at night to gain some noted spot where these pests were unknown.

The spiders, however, are monsters. A lady might fairly scream at them! Covered with poisonous hairs, which get into the skin and irritate it to a frightful pitch, the meggales are visitants that must be most undesirable. Mr. Bates relates how they did to death two poor finches; and one day he found the children of an Indian family, employed to collect for him, with one of these monstrous spiders tied round its waist with a cord, by which they were leading it about the house like a dog!

Amongst very unpleasant visitants may be named the blood-sucking bat. It attacks the tip of the toe, or sometimes the tip of the nose, and is supposed to proceed by affixing one long tooth as a resting-point, while it whirls round silently on that one tooth as a centre; at once boring a hole and lulling the sleeper gently by the soft, fanning motion.

Columns of ants are met, too, moving amongst dense thickets, the main body throwing off foraging parties, and the whole vast army stopping now and then to concentrate its efforts in despoiling some rich citadel—perhaps the papery nests of wasps built in low shrubs, perhaps some mass of rotten wood abounding in insect larvæ; and then the army marches on, laden heavily with its spoils. Now and then, however, arrived at a sunny nook, the word of command seemed passed for a "halt," and to "stand at ease." Then would some ants dress themselves,

and others would dress each other; one stretching out each leg in turn to be washed and brushed by its friends, the antennæ at the end coming in for a friendly wipe. The accounts of the ants, indeed, are amongst the most curious parts of Mr. Bates's book; their ways of life apparently having been much studied.

In passing up the river between the forest banks there is little sometimes to be seen, on either side, beyond this flower-hung fence of verdure.

In one part "the lofty forest towered up like a wall, five or six yards from the path, to the height of perhaps one hundred feet. The tree trunks were only seen partially here and there, nearly the whole frontage, from ground to summit, being covered with a diversified drapery of creeping plants, all of the most vivid shades of green; scarcely a flower to be seen, except where, in some places, a solitary scarlet passion-flower shone like a star in the green mantle."

The trees in these giant forests have many a strange variety,—now towering up, unbroken, a smooth and slender stem; and now, at distant intervals, some giants appear, with trunks that are said to vary from twenty to sixty feet in their vast circumference, rising up at least one hundred feet; while ever and anon the noise of a breaking branch, or the roar of a falling tree, awakens the forest echoes, as the falls of such monsters may, even when they bring not a whole wood in their track. Trees are found, too, with great buttresses, twenty or thirty feet high, and eight or ten from the tree, forming thick wooden walls, between which huts can be built; other trees ribbed and furrowed as by many united stems; others standing up high upon arching roots—mosses, and ferns, and orchids, and climbers, and many plants, sometimes trees themselves, growing in wild profusion all over the great tree stems, in the fork of every branch, and in every knot or hole, covering them with a mass of tangled luxuriant foliage, that extends to the topmost branches.

Here and there, also, you find a great tree all covered with one magnificent mass of flowers—filled with the hum of a million insects, "the murmuring of innumerable bees." But it is *outside* the dome of verdure that the countless flower-buds open; not a blossom perhaps to be seen below, for a hundred feet or more. The beauty is reserved for the eyes that look down upon that waving and glowing mantle, spread on the tops of the far-stretching forest trees.

The rapid changes, too, are amongst the gains and losses of this marvellous forest world; for there will open suddenly, in the fresh early morning, a thousand brilliant blossoms, changing some dull green tree into a dome of flowers; until in the evening comes the down-pour of tropical rains, and all the forest paths are covered with fallen petals, that lie strewn in rosy clouds. Few flowers outlast one day; the temperate morning hours, the great mid-day heat, and the storm at night, bring to them spring and autumn.

At Para there is, indeed, no spring, no summer, no autumn, for every

day brings each; and equal as day and night is also the equilibrium of the temperature through the whole year.

But wonderful above all are the accounts we read of the mighty river's byways and of its banks, when the waters have risen and the dells on each side are overflowed, and boats can row many miles through shady water paths, where on each side are tall trees submerged for many feet, so that the boats creep on along the low arched paths, keeping close beneath the meeting upper branches. Families of Indians live thus on the upper Amazons—half hidden in the deep forest, and with these low-cut water-paths forming their sole high road. "In one of these singular water-paths a narrow and tolerably straight alley stretched away for a long distance before us; on each side were the tops of bushes and young trees, forming a kind of border to the path, and the trunks of the tall forest trees rose at irregular intervals from the water, their crowns interlacing far over our heads, and forming a thick shade. Slender air roots hung down in clusters, and looping sipós dangled from the lower branches; bunches of grass, tillandsia, and ferns sat in the forks of the larger boughs; and the trunks of trees near the water had adhering round them dried masses of fresh-water sponges. There was no current perceptible, and the water was stained of a dark olive-brown hue, but the submerged stems could be seen through it to a great depth. When the paddlers rested for a time, the stillness and gloom of the place became almost painful, our voices waked dull echoes as we conversed, and the noise made by fishes occasionally whipping the surface of the water was quite startling. A cool, moist, clammy air pervaded the sunless shade."*

In the long reach of lowlands that stretch along the river for six months of the year, a person may go for days without entering the main river. All round him extends "the Gapo," an illimitable waste of waters, covered with virgin forest. Now he may scrape against tree-trunks; now bend beneath the crowns of the prickly palm trees, which yet are forty feet high. The Indian still can thread his way through this trackless maze, bending down a twig here and there, or scraping a piece of bark.

Whole tribes inhabit this watery country, too; living in little huts on the sandy banks in dry weather, and then in the floods betaking themselves to their slight-made rafts and to their rude canoes, sleeping in hammocks hung from the trees above the waters, and living on the fish and turtle they find in plenty. Here and there the loveliest flowers, all of most glorious hue, spring up in this lonely waste from floating logs on the water; and then again on trees the yellow orchids shine golden. On floating log islets, too, the grass grows long and green; and on these, as they pass, whole rows of gulls sit gravely.†

But the water-paths are not the only peculiarity of these vast and moving waters. The boatmen on the Amazons live in perpetual dread of

* "The Naturalist on the Amazons."

† Wallace.

the "terras calidas," or landslips, that take place along the steep earthy banks, especially when the waters are rising. Large vessels are sometimes overwhelmed by these avalanches of earth and trees.

Mr. Bates was on one occasion awakened by a noise like the roar of artillery. The night was very dark, and the distant crashes succeeded one another; and though the air was calm, the broad river was much agitated, and the vessel rolled very heavily. Explosion followed explosion, rolling backwards and forwards, and sometimes succeeded by intervals of low rumbling.

The day dawned in about an hour, and then the work of destruction was seen, about three miles off. Large masses of forest, including trees of colossal size, probably two hundred feet in height, were rocking to and fro, and falling headlong one after the other into the water. After each avalanche the wave which it caused returned on the crumbly bank with tremendous force, and caused the fall of other masses by undermining them. The landslip extended over a mile or two of coast, each downfall creating a cloud of spray; the concussion in one place bringing down masses in places far removed from it, the crashes swaying thus to and fro with little prospect of a termination. Two hours after sunrise the destruction was still going on.

One hears a foreigner now and then talking superciliously of "the insular spirit" he declares belongs to Englishmen. It is but one step further when we find that on the Amazons "the river" includes the world.

"I do not recollect seeing a map of any kind at Santarem. The quick-witted people have a suspicion of their deficiencies in this respect, and it is difficult to draw them out on geography; but one day a man holding an important office betrayed himself by asking me, 'On what side of the river was Paris situated?' The question did not arise, as might be supposed, from a desire for accurate topographical knowledge of the Seine, but from the idea that all the world was a great river, and that the different places he had heard of must lie on one shore or the other." The fact of the Amazons being a limited stream, having its origin in narrow rivulets, its beginning and its ending, has never entered the heads of most of the people who have passed their whole lives on its banks.

The life, indeed, has its charms. The little town of Ega is described as being more like a small country town somewhere in Northern Europe, than a South American settlement:—

"The place is healthy, and almost free from insect pests; perpetual verdure surrounds it; the soil is of marvellous fertility, even for Brazil; the endless rivers, and labyrinths of channels, teem with fish and turtle; a fleet of steamers might anchor at any season of the year in the lake, which has uninterrupted water communication straight to the Atlantic."

In towns like these there are, however, difficulties in the way of building any very good houses, such as show pretty plainly the state of

things to contend with. At Ega, for instance, it was found better to send to Para, a distance of 2,800 miles, for doors and window-shutters, as there "were no large saws in the place," and every plank had to be hewn separately from the tree with a hatchet.

At Para the air is clear, and peculiarly transparent. The Italians have a proverb, "See Naples, and then die;" but the good people of Para say, "See Para, and let us live there."

Mr. Bates describes one sunrise, seen from the Para river, when the full moon sank down slowly and clearly on the west horizon, while at the same moment the sun rose glorious in the east; and so clear and soft had been the bright moonlight before, that the growing morning seemed but the increasing brightness of a day that clears.

But now, in these days of travel, and with all the modern openings, such scenes will become very soon familiar to us all. The blue waters of Brazil, and the black rolling floods of the Negro, will be rowed up often by those who have passed through the white stream that flows down the mother river, or seen her white sands glow golden beneath her amber flood. They will gaze where the forest stretches its two thousand miles of shade; on that long line of forest that flanks the broad, yellow stream, grown yellow in its course by the very growth which shadows, staining its once white waters. And yet it becomes monotonous; the vastness of change grows tedious. The calm lakes, with their tame water-lilies, are hailed with delight and rapture. They come as a quiet home, peaceful and unexciting amidst all the whirl of life, and its ceaseless strain and effort. Those lakes, with their grassy margins, are ranked with the robin's song.

A CURIOUS PUBLIC CHARACTER.

WALKING up Holborn one very wet afternoon, three months ago or more, I suddenly resolved upon entering the "good parlor" of a well-known tavern in that busy thoroughfare, for the purpose of shelter. The day was WET, and I need use no adjective about it; but whereas it had been raining at a respectable, slow-going pace during the previous part of the day, it put on all speed, and rained fast and frantically at the moment I formed my resolution.

Upon entering the "good parlor," I found three gentlemen engaged in loud conversation. They were talking about the weather, which, always, you know, a somewhat fertile and common topic, is most common when the clouds are descending in those feline and canine drops popularly condensed into cats and dogs. Two of the gentlemen were seated together at one table, discussing London beer and London tobacco, and the other gentleman sat at another table, discussing corned beef. The beef, which was very neatly served up in a greasy scrap of newspaper, which in its turn served for a plate, had been procured round the corner, the single gentleman said. The bread was from round the corner too; but the beer was from where he was.

The two gentlemen who sat together were, as I found from their conversation, inhabitants of Cambridge. One of them—who was the stouter and bigger of the two, and who (in virtue, I suppose, of those superior qualifications) pulled more lustily at his long churchwarden pipe, and drank more deeply than his friend, of the common pitcher before them (or was it that *he* had discharged the score, I wonder?)—having asked the gentleman sitting alone if he had ever been to Cambridge, and received an affirmative reply so suddenly and so fiercely as to indicate great astonishment that such a question could have been thought necessary, added, that he was a Cambridge tradesman, that he was personally acquainted with several gentlemen of the Cambridge colleges, and that he—in short, he supplied the Cambridge collegians with clothes. I think clothes was the word; but as my attention was more particularly directed to the single gentleman—the remnants of whose repast were at this precise moment being consigned, bread, meat, paper and all, to the darkest recesses of an inner coat pocket—I cannot avouch the fact. At all events, the gentleman had numbers of friends at the colleges, and he laid very great stress upon that.

"Ah! yes," quoth the single gentleman, smiling calmly and complacently within himself, with whom he was clearly on the very best terms—"ah! yes; I've been everywhere, *I believe*. I've been everywhere you'll find in the dictionary." He said dictionary, and he said it with emphasis too. "I'm a queer fellow, I am. You don't know what I am. You don't know who I am. I've been everything, and I'm nothing. Of

course I'm nothing: Say, if you like, I am nothing: Say that, if you like."

Nobody, as it happened, having said that the gentleman was nothing, and nobody having hinted that he would have liked to say the gentleman was nothing, the two gentlemen sitting behind their long churchwarden pipes seemed quite taken aback, and said nothing at all. It was clear the conversation had taken a turn for which they saw no immediate necessity; and for which they were not quite prepared.

"Ah! yes," continued the gentleman sitting alone, who had now taken to untying a large parcel he had with him, which contained several smaller parcels, in each of which were smaller parcels still, packets of envelopes and the like, "I like genius. Shakspeare was a genius, and genius carried the walls of Badajoz" (he said "joz" as we pronounce "Joe," not as the Peninsulars themselves pronounce the syllable). "I don't like honesty, firstly, because there's no such thing; secondly, because Shakspeare says honesty's a fool. I like the Bishop of —, because he's a genius, and is *not* honest. I don't like the Bishop of —, because he is honest, and is *not* a genius. And yet I do like the Bishop of —; I like him for his earnestness and—yes, for his honesty."

Up to this time I had not joined in the talk, but as the gentlemen with the pipes—their vigorous application to which did not seem to clear the mental horizon any more than it cleared the atmosphere proper above them—had not yet recovered from their apparent surprise, I ventured to say to the single gentleman, who was now writing addresses upon a quantity of his envelopes, that his argument lacked consistency and perspicuity. I thought it somewhat incompatible with honest reasoning, for instance, that, having started with himself, he skipped to genius (he couldn't see the skip at all!); and that, having laid violent and remorseless hands upon that word, he should next proceed to belay two most excellent bishops. I professed my utter inability to see what the bishops had to do with his visitations to the "dictionary."

If I had applied a lighted torch to the whole of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey's gunpowder magazines simultaneously, I could hardly have expected a severer or more appalling shock than we now experienced.

"You, sir!" shouted he, springing to his feet, and glaring at me across his table, at which I had a minute before taken a seat,—"*you, sir!*" he reiterated, in a voice of thunder, stalking round to me, grinning and hissing at me, and showing every tooth in his head, so close to my face that I felt his hot, strong breath fall full upon it; breath which reminded me, even at that fell crisis, of his commissariat journey round the corner,—"*you!* why, man, I'm ruined! I'm robbed! For sixteen years, ay, for more than sixteen years, I've been starving. My own father, who belonged to the Church, left all his money, not to me, who belong to the Church too, but to my sister, who belongs to no church and to nobody." (Through an early disappointment perhaps, I thought.) "Do you think a man's

calmly to stand *that*? But I have it in for them. I've put the rack of the law on 'em, and they'll find that ——," mentioning a name which he said was his name, and smiting its excited possessor smartly upon the breast, "is not the fool they take him for."

The gentleman was very considerably mollified when he found he had it in for them; but with the law's rack he was in a state of perfect ecstasy. He returned to his place again, and as he once more dropped down among his envelopes and his parcels, he said he was not such a fool as they supposed.

I candidly confess I could not make much of this queer fellow, but in that respect I was certainly not behindhand with the gentlemen of the churchwarden pipes, for they, judging from their silence and puzzled looks, could make nothing at all of the man. At this stage they quietly bade him "good day"—an act of courtesy I regretted to see they did not extend to the other gentleman,—and left the room.

We—the other gentleman and myself—got on much better alone. He now became much milder and much more confidential—in all things except as regarded the envelopes he was directing. Outwardly, he was not unlike a commercial traveller, a second or third rate commercial traveller; and, hinting that he was probably engaged in matters of business, I took up a newspaper. He indignantly denied that he had any connection with business. He scorned business. He pitied and despised every poor narrow-souled wretch who entered into it. He was a gentleman. He had been educated at Oxford—he afterwards said, and it reminded me of the adage concerning deceiving fibbers and deceitful memories, Trin. Coll., Dublin—and had taken the degree of M.A. No, he hadn't exactly done that, but he had obtained a Bachelor's degree, which comprised all the scholarship necessary for the higher honour, and the latter was a mere question of money. It was to be had by the paying for

He was still at his envelopes, with which he got on very slowly, first directing one of them, then folding up what appeared to be a printed circular, then enclosing it in the directed envelope and sealing it; then addressing another envelope, and so on. I told him about Adam Smith's theory on division of labour; he didn't seem to know anything of it; at which I wondered, he being a Master of Arts, you know: I thought, too, it singular that he should have made such a mess of Badojox, but—but that is by the way—I told him that if he first directed all his envelopes, then folded all his circulars, then enclosed them all, and then gummed them all, he would do the work in a tenth part of the time. He liked the idea, and adopted it.

When he had finished, he came over to me, and sat close to my side. I was again reminded that the Master of Arts had been round the corner, but I bore my sufferings with fortitude. He said he liked me. He didn't like many people; indeed, he couldn't at that moment lay his finger upon any one he *did* honestly like—I believed him!—but he liked me. He

never confided his secrets to any one ; but he would confide them to me, if I would accept his confidence. I thought his circular was about business, did I ? It was not. It was about pleasure. It was about an entertainment to be given in a few days from that time, by a friend of his, a gentleman, an elegant and accomplished scholar, a man of surpassing intellect, of a noble heart. I would learn something by-and-bye that would astonish me. He would let me see one of the very circulars he was sending off. Indeed, he would address it to me in his own hand—would I favour him with my name ? There was his—ahem—there was a programme. What did I think of it ? “Mr. —, M.A., will (D.V.) give Readings from Shakspeare and the Poets,” in a hall at the West End. I thought it would be worth going to hear, “if,” I added, cautiously, “the man were worth aught.” He contemplated me for a moment in silent admiration, and shook my hand. He was proud to shake the hand of an honest man. If I only knew who and what he was—he who was now addressing me, he said !—the gentleman, the scholar, the entertainer, the nobleman by nature, was—he, the Master of Arts ! and he again uttered the name which he said was his name ; he again smote his bosom as he had smitten it before.

I was not half enough amazed, I dare say, on finding myself face to face with a person of such distinguished ability and attainments as this new friend ; but he pressed me to take two complimentary tickets, and assured me I should be delighted with what I should see and hear. I offered him a shilling for one of the tickets of the unreserved seats, and the nobleman accepted it with thanks. As he, upon the instant, called for a pint of beer and a screw, and paid for the same out of my coin, I became sadly apprehensive that he had not a very plentiful supply of money. I could almost have found it in my heart to purchase another ticket, but I didn't.

I then returned to the programmes. I supposed they were for private circulation. They were. I suggested that he should advertise his entertainment, and obtain a favourable press notice. He would fill more benches, I thought, by that means. I regret to state that the Master of Arts now got bad-tempered again. He hated the press. The press was venal. And what was the value of a piece of honest criticism, supposing for a moment, which he didn't believe, such a thing ever was ? What was it but the opinion of one man, probably a weak-minded, fanatical, bigoted man ? That was all ; and what was the opinion of one man among five hundred ? He, the M.A., gave Readings for amusement : if he could pocket a sovereign or a fi'-pun' note by the performance, well and good ; that, he believed, was his own business, entirely and exclusively.

I was pained to discover that, when the gentleman was in the humour of hating, he could hate anything and anybody. He hated his profession ; he hated his church ; he even hated the bishops, whom a minute before he had loved so well.

The dogs and cats had now long since disappeared, had been fairly scared away by the respectable, civilized, slow-going drizzle, which drizzled and drizzled and drizzled, but of which some owners of strong minds, and of strong constitutions too, I suppose, thought so little, that they disdained to open their umbrellas to keep it off, tucking their faithful gingham under their arms and marching on. And after promising the Master of Arts that I would assuredly attend his Readings, I marched off.

When the evening arrived I had no little difficulty in finding the hall where my friend was to read. It was in an out-of-the-way, narrow street, of no name. I had been looking about for it for perhaps a quarter of an hour, and was tired of looking about. A man was approaching, and of him I determined I would ask my way. Just, however, as I was about to speak to him, I discovered, to my amazement, that the man was the Master of Arts himself. I would have spoken to him still, but for his being engaged at that moment in speaking—in an angry, ferocious manner, as if he were greatly displeased with the conduct of the individual he was addressing—to himself. I abstained, therefore, from making my presence known to the gentleman; but taking for granted that, as the entertainer was there, the place of entertainment could not be far off, I followed him. He had a very animated debate with himself for some hundred yards, when he cut it short by turning into a gin palace. Through the folding doors I distinctly heard him call for brandy. Looking at my watch, I found that but two minutes had to elapse before the time appointed for the commencement of the entertainment; and having no desire to be detected in the disagreeable character of eavesdropper, I inquired my way of a policeman, and was able almost directly to find the hall.

It was a narrow little hall, of very cheerless aspect, and capable of accommodating, perhaps, a hundred and fifty persons. There could not have been more than thirty present when I entered, for just before the performance began I counted the audience, and found it to number thirty-five, the majority of whom, I ought here to say, were well-dressed and intelligent-looking persons.

Two or three minutes after the fixed time there was a little commotion at the door, the entrance door of the hall, a turning round of young people, and the whispering silence of expectation, during which the Master of Arts, running his long fingers through his longer hair, entered the room with a dash. How many more brandies had been called for, how many more debates had been begun and ended, I know not; but I never saw a greater or more sudden change in all my life. Look upon this picture—the M.A. muttering to himself in the wide street; look upon that—the M.A. marching up the narrow hall! Some admiring friends—two or three little boys and a little common-looking man, with a very grimy face—cheered him as he walked up the aisle; and when he reached the platform, the Master of Arts smiled his sweetest, and bowed his profoundest. Remembering his fierce visage when I met him a few minutes before, I felt very thankful to the brandy indeed!

The Master of Arts retired for a moment to an anteroom, which looked for all the world like a vestry—perhaps it *was* a vestry; at all events, there was a religious air about the place, which ill harmonized, I thought, with something I had in my mind—and reappeared with the remains of the old smile, his sweetest smile, illuminating his features. Very obvious it was to me, that he had determined to make that smile *last*. It was spread over the whole remainder of that night—rather too lavishly, perhaps, at first; rather too parsimoniously, perhaps, afterwards; like the fresh butter of the unthrifty housewife in the fable. There were not many more smiles, nay, there was not even the ghost of one other smile for him that night; and the old original had become very thin and very seedy by the time it was wanted, wanted very much.

Starting with "Hamlet," the entertainer just recited a passage, and then commented upon it in language of his own. He didn't comment upon "Hamlet" exclusively, as some of his audience appeared to imagine he ought to have done, but darted off, in, I confess, a rather tantalizing manner, from the moody Dane to the subject of the Queen's English—my mind *would* wander to the scenes of carnage at the walls of Badajoz!—even as he had departed from his "dictionary" to the bishops. It was not an edifying spectacle, I grieve to say, and I grieved more at the time to think that the poor fellow didn't know his business at all. His audience, I am certain, was a very indulgent audience; but he spoiled it completely before he had engaged its attention ten minutes. Nature had not conferred a superlatively beautiful visage upon the gentleman, but the twistings, and jerkings, and contortions, both bodily and facial, with which he unjustly sought to improve upon the Old Lady, had the sorry effect of making the man look mad. The audience tittered; then laughed; and then, at the precise stage where the text required that they should be moved to terror and to tears, they roared—which, you will conceive, was not very reassuring to the entertainer.

Very little of the long, sweet smile remained now, and what did remain of it, I perceived—or I thought I perceived—had taken another complexion. It had no pretence to sweetness now. It showed its teeth, and gnashed them; and it said, "You may go to the —." It said that as plain as I write it, and it deigned not to use dashes for unpleasant words. In a word, it defied the audience, and told them they might like the Readings or not, as they pleased.

Then, before the entertainment was a quarter over, before the entertainer had seemed thoroughly to get into it even, while the Master of Arts was concealing his wrath or recalling his forgotten part in the sober depths of a tumbler of water, decent people rose from their seats, and, with all possible decency, left the hall. One went and another went, till very few remained but the little boys and the little dirty man, who stared at this unexpected proceeding, but cheered their man nevertheless. And their man, not knowing what to make of it, dashed away into the vestry,

where I could see by his shadow on the window he was stamping about and tearing his hair.

There was to have been an interval of ten minutes later on, at the conclusion of the first part. That interval, for the best reason—that it couldn't be helped—was allowed now. At the end, then, of these ten minutes, the Master of Arts came again upon the platform. He looked weary and jaded, but essayed to read to the almost empty seats. He couldn't do it. He tried to finish "Hamlet," and failed—tried Hood, and failed—tried the other poets in the programme, and failed in them all. He hadn't the heart to do it. At length he left the platform in disgust, and his audience left *him* in disgust, in sorrow, or in disappointment.

Now when the Master of Arts had asked me for my name, in the manner I have stated above, I readily gave it to him, and I told him, besides, that I was to be found at a certain coffee-house in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street every morning. About a week after the evening of the entertainment I was leaving this tavern at noon one day, when a man touched me on the arm, and addressed me. "I beg your pardon, master." I turned round and beheld the Master of Arts. He wanted to speak to me. Would I, for that purpose, accompany him to some quiet hotel, where we might discuss a matter of pressing importance to him? I professed my willingness. We wandered about the City nearly half an hour before we found a house quiet enough for him; but at length we did discover a retreat—not a very elegant one, I can remember—which my companion pronounced "just the thing."

The matter of importance was so long in coming, that I thought it would never come at all. It appeared to me oftener than once that he had forgotten all about it. But just as we were on the point of rising to go, the idea crossed his mind. He had been robbed! His check-taker at the Readings had robbed him. *He*, the M.A., was satisfied there were 150 persons present on that evening; was I? (He wanted me to say "Yes," and to subpoena me as a witness, the cunning dog!) The check-taker had accounted for the proceeds of fifty, which number he admitted; had robbed him of the difference; and he, the M.A., acting under "the best legal advice in London" (I afterwards found that the eminent legal adviser was a broken-down lawyer's clerk, whom he had met in a low pothouse), had summoned the culprit. He couldn't afford to make it a criminal case, for then he would get no money back. I frankly told the man I had counted the audience, when it only numbered thirty-five, and that the extreme number could not be much higher. He went into a great rage, and we parted in anger.

Several days afterwards, as I was quietly looking over the morning papers, not dreaming of the Master of Arts, and not wishing, I confess, to have anything further to do with him, the Master of Arts entered the room, perspiring and breathless. He had a matter of the most urgent importance to consult me upon. Would I meet him at a given place

later in the day? Although far from desiring the man's company—indeed, I did my best in a feeble way to show I desired to shun it—I again consented to his wishes. At the appointed time he came, and his first mysterious words were that he had “arranged it.” If he could have got double the sum it would have been more satisfactory—more convenient, in fact; but he had “arranged it.”

He had the old parcel with him again, with the smaller parcels, the envelopes, the tickets, and the like; and he opened these, and shuffled them about, without any observable end or aim. I could see the man was thinking of something else, something he had not spoken to me about, and I was silent. But he presently surprised me by turning suddenly upon me, and exclaiming that he had “got it,” but could have wished he had got more.

By degrees the eccentric Master of Arts unfolded his object. He had engaged to give another entertainment at a small village a few miles out of London that very evening. His profession sternly stipulated for a decent coat and a clean shirt. Both of these he had, but they—they were “not at home.” He tried to laugh when he added that they were at his uncle's. The plain fact of the matter was, he said—he never concealed anything from me, he put in parenthetically,—he wanted money. He had received a small sum, but it wouldn't suffice, he found. There were hundreds of gentlemen—thousands of gentlemen, he might say—in London, who would advance him any sum he might require; but, unfortunately for him—he really felt he was the most unlucky dog on earth—unfortunately for him, they were all out of town. Would I——?

He had given me a complimentary ticket for this second entertainment also. He had hoped I would find it convenient to attend. He was sure I would be delighted. (By-and-bye the reader will perceive that had I attended I should *not* have been delighted.) And then he said, “Would I?”

I wouldn't, because I couldn't. I hadn't got the amount upon my person.

I cannot give any adequate idea of what followed. He didn't believe me. I was not his friend. I was plotting with his enemies against him. (I am sure I didn't know one of them.) Finally, he lashed himself into a foaming passion, smashed his tumbler upon the table (the landlord very quickly made him pay for it, though), and called me a liar.

I don't like to be called a liar. I believe I share to the fullest extent the detestation of that epithet. But I pitied this poor fellow's infirmities so much, that I laid not a finger upon him, and I am now very thankful it was so. There was something vicious in my mind, however, and I uttered the word “swindler.” With the speed of a flash of lightning the Master of Arts snatched up his parcel and went. He walked out without saying a word.

Strongly suspecting that this fellow was a rogue, I wrote to the little

village where the Readings were to have been given that evening. There was no such entertainment given; no such person as the M.A. was known there; and, so far as I could discover, no such person had been near there on any such business. Nothing, in short, was known of the man *there*.

He was known elsewhere, however. I have said he had an unconquerable objection to advertising, and to a press notice, however flattering and however favourable it might be. Subsequent inquiries have convinced me that the man had a very strong reason for this curious antipathy. He was a discharged lunatic—a very clever one, however; and his “enemies” were after him, not for his lunacy, but for his arrant roguery. At the moment I write, the Master of Arts, the entertainer, is sitting in vile quod, picking abominable oakum, as a punishment for his dirty misdeeds!

I have but to add that this account is no fiction. It is *true*—weakly told, but absolutely true in every particular.

PYTHAGORAS AND THE POETS.

At the early age of eighteen, Pythagoras was crowned as successful wrestler in the great Olympian circus of Elis. He is said to have been a youth of remarkable comeliness as well as strength—a reputation not easily acquired among a people who devoted so much attention to physical training. To a robust habit of body, he combined a studious, contemplative disposition, and had scarcely arrived at the period of legal manhood when he had exhausted as much as was known in Greece of music, astronomy, and medicine. He then travelled to Egypt, a land famous for the profound learning of its priests, who, it was reported, held the key of many deeper mysteries than even those hid behind the awful veil of the Eleusinian secrets. The Samian was tested by the severest ordeals before the sacred science was imparted to him; but it seems not to have satisfied his longing for knowledge, as he is reported to have subsequently studied numbers in Phœnicia, astronomy from the wise shepherds of Chaldea; and his acquaintance with some principles of moral philosophy suggest his having picked up in his wanderings many of the Hebraic traditions of the East. On returning to his native country, after an absence of twenty-two years, he gave a series of lectures, expounding his peculiar doctrines, and soon gathered a large number of pupils about him. His system included a strict novitiate of silence, and an unquestioning obedience to himself as master, as well as an unwavering faith in his theories. He inculcated the virtue of self-denial, and encouraged the practice of wholesome corporal exercise. His pupils were not denied the chiefest charm of social intercourse, and ladies were permitted to become graduates in his college, though whether the rule of silence was imposed upon them does not clearly appear. At all events, the highest honours were open to them, as we find Theano, the wife of Pythagoras, succeeding her husband as president of the association after his death—a classical precedent for the rights of women, with which Miss Martineau is certainly acquainted.

Pythagoras seems to have gained an extraordinary ascendancy over his disciples, and it is evident he did not shrink from using a low species of imposture to increase the great respect and veneration in which they held him. He spread a report that he was the son of Hermes, and that he derived godlike powers from his origin. One of his thighs was of gold. He had a spell to tame the fiercest beast, or to make the eagle drop from the sky stone dead to his feet. The tutelary deity of a river was known to converse with him, and by a mere exertion of will he could appear in two different places at the same moment of time. Retiring to a cave for some months, he would issue forth pale and thoughtful, and relate how he had been to hell, and spoken familiarly with the poor moaning spirits who flitted by the dread shores of the Styx. For his own

aims, he encouraged a belief in the gods amongst his followers, though such a man must have known as well as the Roman brutor who came long after him, "that two oracles could not look each other in the face without laughing;" but he probably chose to accept as much of the mythology as suited his views, and such portions of it as would help to grace some of the wonderful æsthetic theories which he was the first to enunciate. What those theories were in their completeness is unfortunately unknown to us, though it is conjectured that Plato or Aristotle could have supplied the information. They would appear to have been based on the supposition of a universal rhythm and harmony regulating all the phenomena of nature, and it is suspected that Pythagoras reduced his speculations to some law of harmony and proportion applicable to the work of the sculptor, which served to produce those unapproachable models of art which the world has ever since been contented to imitate. We are only concerned with one chapter of his lucubrations at present, and it is the design of this paper to draw the reader's attention to it. His notion of the music of the spheres has been passed from hand to hand—from one poet to another—from the grey dawn of those ancient days down even to our own time. So popular did the legend become, that if one were to select for illustration the poetical extracts concerning the music of the spheres, they would occupy every column of this journal from its birth to this present issue. I survived the gods themselves. It was a belief affording the most agreeable explanation of a feeling not otherwise easy to define. "The most elevated idea of music," says Bishop Usher, "arises from a confused perception of ideal or visionary beauty and rapture, which is sufficiently perceivable to fire the imagination, but not clear enough to become an object of knowledge." Supposing we had not the revelations of Christianity to help us, could we find any better way of giving expression to the solemn emotions stirred within us on the contemplation of the celestial bodies, than by ascribing to them a power which in its influence (though exerting it through a different medium) was very similar, causing sensations of longing, of calm, of awakening, of desire, and of worship, every one of which dispositions can be brought about by music? This would only be an ordinary effort of the mind, which is always endeavouring to explain that which is unknown and remote by something near at hand and familiar; and it would be no undue straining of any of the faculties to associate the "confused perception of ideal or visionary beauty and rapture" occurring at the moment of listening to good music, with the same feeling arising from the sight of the splendour and glory of the stars. When once we have begun to think that effects are analogous, we are anxious to establish an agreement of causes; and, indeed, it is by this process that every law of nature is constructed. It is not at all necessary to suppose that Pythagoras argued after this fashion, which more properly appertains to another system of thought than that with which he was accustomed to reason. The gossamer braids, glistening with dew, which hang from every bush in the

summer morning, and lie upon the meadow like ornaments of lace and jewels upon a bride, are not more slight and fragile than the materials which we often use to clothe and deck our most pleasant fancies, and bring them within the visible reach of our knowledge. The reader will see many illustrations of this in the latter portion of the following extracts.

Pythagoras taught his class that the stars moved in a grand, never-ceasing march, making an eternal concert, as it were, led by two sidereal suns, who regulated the motions of this magnificent choir. He had heard this music himself, and could even mark the different variations of note as they echoed from the vaulted roof which arched a vast distance above the orchestre. Saturn boomed a deep bass note; and the moon, which was nearest to us, emitted a shrill tenor sound. The musical scale of seven notes was represented by seven planets, whose vibrations were in harmonic proportion to their respective distances. This theory of Pythagoras gained a new and nobler signification on the advent of Christianity. It was especially gratifying to consider the greatest works of God for ever hymning the praises of their Creator; and we find the music of the spheres introduced into the earliest devotional poetry. Gregory Nazianzen, a Greek Christian poet, looked upwards, and sang,—

“The great stars treading choral measures o’er us.”

And Cynesius, of Cyrene, in a fervid burst of laudation, says,—

“And the holy stars stood breathless,
Trembling in their chorus deathless!”

Milton takes up the same theme,—

“And ye five other wandering fires, that move
In mystic dance, not without song.”

So Young, in one of his boldest figures,—

“Thou who didst put to flight
Primeval silence, when the morning stars,
Exulting, *shouted* o’er the rising ball!”

On this division of our subject, however, it is scarcely necessary to dwell, as out of Milton alone whole pages of such examples might be extracted. We will see how Messieurs the poets use the Pythagorean legend in the general exercise of their art, without any theological reference; and, first of all, hear how deliciously Shakspeare turns the harmonious astronomy to account:—

“Sit, Jessica, look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
There’s not the smallest orb which thou behold’st
But in his motion like an angel sings,

PYTHAGORAS AND THE POETS.

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

Byron heard the spherul music in its awful sublimity :—

"Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres,
Singing in thunder round me " [Cain].

Goethe, in that trumpet-tongued prologue to "Faust," makes Raphael say,—

"In chorus with each kindred star,
The sun sounds forth his ancient song."

And as we have got to the fatherland, hear Schiller and Klopstock on the same theme :—

"And comes the world's wide harmony in vain upon thine ears,
The stream of music borne aloft from yonder choral spheres?
And feel'st thou not the measure which eternal nature keeps,
The whirling dance for ever held in yonder azure deeps?"

"The heavenly ear can list the moving spheres,
And while Selene and Pleione roll
In thunder, and rejoicing hears
The sounds that swell beneath the pole."

Uhland—melancholy, dreamy Uhland—of course does not miss the divine music :—

"Ye marvellous tones, that scarce I hear,
What longing ye breathe from above!"

Longfellow, in the following passage, gives an exact and very elegant description of this beautiful fancy. The lines are full of just and musical expressions, every epithet felicitous and poetical. It is taken from one of his earlier pieces, the "Occultation of Orion:"—

"I saw, with its celestial keys,
Its chords of air, its frets of fire,
The Samian's great Æolian lyre,
Rising through all its sevenfold bars,
From earth unto the fixed stars.
And through the dewy atmosphere,
Not only could I see, but hear
Its wondrous and harmonious strings
In sweet vibration, sphere by sphere,—
From Dian's circle, light and near,
Onward to vaster and wider rings,
Where, chanting through his beard of snows,
Majestic, mournful Saturn goes,
And down the sunless realms of space
Reverberates the thunder of his bass!"

Sir Isaac Newton said on one occasion, that he was inclined to believe that some general laws prevailed with regard to the agreeable affections of all our senses. Hazlitt was of opinion that there was a harmony of colours, and a harmony of sounds unquestionably, and an original harmony of forms, as the principle of beauty and the source of pleasure. Perhaps, after all, the towers and walls of Thebes, rising into glorious shape at the sound of Amphion's harp, is but a legend hiding a deep and golden truth which may yet be brought to light. We have all heard of the blind man who compared a scarlet colour to the fanfare of a bugle, thus supplying a metaphysical derivation for the rather slangy adjective of "loud," as applied to gaudy and obtrusive hues. Schlegel used to insist that the paintings of Correggio produced exactly the same effect upon him as a piece of elaborate music. At the next exhibition of the Royal Academy, how often will the art critics of the London press speak of the *tone* of a picture, the harmony of such and such tints, the discord and noisy vulgarism of others, &c., &c.! The poets, as well as painters, have plenty of sufficient excuses for taking harmony and melody as representatives of the highest manifestations of the beautiful, and they have done so with a remarkable unanimity. A landscape, a flower, the face and figure of a handsome woman,—in fact, all nature, all humanity, in the abstract and concrete, in the singular and general, share in this comparison. Byron tells us,—

"There's music in all things, if men had ears;
This earth is but an echo of the spheres."

Coleridge expresses the purely Pythagorean sentiment,—

"And if all animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought as o'er them sweeps,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each and God of all!"

Milton goes to a "solemn music,"—and indeed music must have had a special solemnity for the blind poet, shut out from the sight of things. He, too, sings of the harmony of nature, but his truly Christian Muse, ever consecrated to worship, turns the occasion to religious thought. Once a time was when the earth joined the seraphim and the cherubic host "in hymns devout and holy psalms,"—

"Till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason."

This music was not altogether silenced, for Wordsworth, passive to the impression of every stream, flower, mountain, grove, and lake, was able to hear it:—

"One song they sang, and it was audible ;
 Most audible then when the fleshy ear,
 O'ercome by modest prelude of that strain,
 Forgot her functions, and slept undisturb'd."

What think you of music in the *scent* of a flower?—

"And the hyacinth, purple, and white, and blue,
 Which flung from its bells a soft peal anew
 Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
 It was felt like an odour within the sense" (*sensitive plant*).—SHELLEY.

I wished I could make my pet geranium do something of this kind.
 The bard of Rydal had also a concert in his flower-beds:—

"Where will they stop, those breathing powers,
 Those spirits of the new-born flowers?

• • • • •

Up from their native ground they rise,
 In *mute aërial harmonies!*"

Having noticed the music of the stars, the landscape, and the flowers, there yet remains a more charming object than any of them, to be regarded under the same condition. An ingenious Scotch gentleman,* who has done more for the true advancement of æsthetic science than any other living, engages that, with certain combinations of a circle, triangle, and square, the most perfect face and figure may be constructed; and furthermore, that this combination may result in a more perfect type of beauty than has ever been witnessed in a human creature; and further again, that the thing has been done successfully more than two thousand years ago! I doubt much whether this announcement will meet with the favour of the ladies. Miss would not like to be told that the pretty face and neat shape which she contemplates with so much satisfaction in her looking-glass every morning, was a composition of triangles and squares, and other horrid things which her brother George is always poring over when "going in," as he calls it, for the medal on mathematical science. However, there is a gallant addition to Mr. Hay's theory, namely, that the regulation of his geometrical figures must be in accord with certain harmonic proportions existing in music; so that we pass immediately from the prosaic figures to the poetical notes, and the ladies will, we are sure, have not the least objection to our considering them fashioned according to sweet tunes and harmonies. It may assist us, in believing this beautiful notion, to recollect that the word "harmony" originally signified the just proportions of things, and that its first application to sound was metaphorical. But who cares for philosophic data when wanting to say fine compliments? Not

* Mr. Hay, author of "The Natural Principles of Beauty as developed in the Female Figure;" "Orthographic Beauty of the Parthenon, &c.;" "Theory of Harmony and Form."

your poet, certainly. Gentle Shakspeare, who played Troubadour and Bonnibel on his own account, in spite of the many wicked satires he wrote against poor wistful lovers, thus addressed his mistress in "The Passionate Pilgrim :"—

"How oft when thou, *my music*, music play'st."

Elsewhere he says, "The *tune* of Imogen." A later poet speaks of—

"The *music* breathing from Zuleika's face ;"

and Wordsworth very happily,—

"*Beauty* born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face."

In the following description of "Evangeline" this fancy is deliciously expressed :—

"But a celestial brightness, a more ethereal beauty,
Shone in her face, and invested her voice, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walk'd with God's benediction upon her ;
And where *she had pass'd*, it seem'd like the ceasing of *exquisite music*."

She is gone from you, but the tones vibrate yet,—linger in your ear like the recollection of a sweet melody long after the world and its hard necessities have placed you apart. Alas ! life is made up of sterner stuff and much more vulgar purposes for the most of us, than to pass any of it in the pleasant melodious dalliances our poets sing of.

There is truly no more delicate way of expressing the warmest passion than by comparing its influence to melody. The tenderness of a kind look ; the mere stirring of lips with the timid, half-spoken words of fondness fluttering about, and yet afraid to leave them ; all the dear conceits of that wild and improbable dream, which go to make up the old, old tale, find their fittest utterance in music, and their meaning is best interpreted by comparison with it :—

"And we will talk until thought's melody
Become too sweet for utterance, and it die,
To live again in looks which dart
With thrilling tones into the voiceless heart."

SHELLEY, "*Epipsychidion*."

Even these cold-hearted wits of the days of bagwigs, ruffles, and swords, were obliged to seek their best types of womanhood in the prim landscape gardens of Arcadia (constructed so as not to offend by *trop de verdure*). Even they were sensible of a similitude between Chloe or Phœbe, and the charms of music. In No. 603 of the *Spectator* there is a specimen Pastoral (with an air of sly satire about it) which contains an example of this. Colin (who in old pictures is generally drawn with knickerbockers, industriously playing on a flageolet, and surrounded by numerous sheep, whose appearances are ridiculously suggestive of well-stuffed bolsters) has lost his Phœbe. Whether she went off with a con-

sumption, or another Colin, the text discloseth not. She leaves, however, a blank not only in his faithful breast, but in the lovely scenes by which he is surrounded. When formerly Phæbe and he, in sportful innocence, played (reader, it was in their *salad* days) with the young (spring) lamb, how happy that time, when spring love and beauty (and salad, and perhaps mint sauce) were all in their prime! But now in their frolics, when by him (Colin) they pass, he (reckless creature) flings at their fleeces a handful of grass! He also, I am sorry to say, further indulges his cruel propensities by beating his dog with his crook, an animal who, in another verse, discloses quite a sentimental Tray in his character,—at last our Colin hits on the graceful compliment which almost gives the semblance of poetry to his doleful plaint:—

“But now she is absent; though still they sing on,
The words are but lonely, the melody’s gone!”

Mr. Pope, in a mawkish composition not much better than that from which I have quoted, repeats the same idea:—

“Fair Daphne’s dead,—and music is no more!”

The manner of a woman’s walk—a dignified, easy gait, regulating the natural elasticity which sound health and perfect form is sure to give, which does not unduly disturb that engaging repose belonging to the most supreme beauty of person—has invariably been the subject of poetic admiration and enthusiasm. A goddess in mortal guise might be discovered by the unconscious dignity of her footsteps. Southey’s Kailyal, in the gorgeous Oriental epic of Kehama,—

“Moved graceful as the dark-eyed nymphs of heaven,
Such harmony to her steps was given.”

That dear old “Talking Oak” of Alfred Tennyson’s, worth all the pastoral beech trees that ever nodded above the loose-kirtled shepherdesses of Arcady, thus gallantly describes a little favourite of his:—

“Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass
So slightly, *musically* made,
So light upon the grass.”

A broken heart (who does not recollect the “Broken Heart” of the “Annuals” of forty years ago, with the guitar, the high-bodied dress, and the air of a sea-sick Lydia Languish?) shows itself on the blank, wearied face, with a sense of a dead, complete silence. Some weight of care or disappointment has stopped the vibration of all music there. Do we not meet with faces vivacious and sprightly as a gallopade, and just for a moment capable of wearing the more thoughtful cadence of a waltz? There are those also whom we can never regard without involuntarily

thinking of silly polkas, and other mere hop-and-turn-about tunes, seeming not to possess any power of changing to a graver mood or more serious measure. Such countenances are really dumb of themselves, but can echo dance music faithfully enough, every feature being alive and in play at the sound of the flutes and fiddles, but dropping to a dull, noiseless vacancy at the final twirl of the orchestra. Others, again, carry a tune of false sentiment (like that sort of music which the French term *classique*), and if your ear be defective, or your taste uncultivated, it is very likely you will be deceived into believing that the wretched trash is a real expression of pure and worthy fancies. The various clever movements, the dying falls, the startling chords, the brilliant meretricious roudades, —the whole symphony, indeed, made up of dangerous surprises, half truthful, half sensual, and completely mischievous, form the ogling stock in trade, the nods and wreathed smiles of Miss Blanche Amory and her syren companions. But they are exceptions, those Miss Sharps and Miss Amorys, or life would be a very burden, every man having to plug his ears like Ulysses. There are women of sweet, maidenly natures, growing up in the practice of kindnesses, of tender household duties, of simple, godly aims, and of genial, pleasant accomplishments,—

“Till, at the last, they set themselves to man,
Like perfect music into noble words.”

There is no guile, no sensation tricks about them. They do not wear pork-pie hats or archery leggings. What a lovable lady is this that Bulwer describes in his “Duchess of Vallière”! in *musical* terms, too, which is to me a sufficient excuse for making the quotation :—

“In the maze
Of her harmonious beauties, Modesty,
Like some severer grace that leads the choir
Of her sweet sisters, every airy motion
Attunes to such chaste charm.”

Another dramatist, quoted with much gusto by Southey in the “Doctor,” tells how the fairer sex should be described after the manner of a song :—

“Sing of the nature of woman, and then the song
Shall be full of variety—old crotchets,
And most sweet closes. It shall be humorous,
Grave, fantastic, amorous, melancholy, sprightly,
One in all, and all in one.”—MARSTON.

Schelling, whose curious speculations into the rather misty regions of transcendentalism have been fruitful of many strange and recondite truths, argues in what manner our mental faculties are subject to the influences of the material nature, and how again we can make the objective world itself yield to our own representations. “This could never be,” he says, “if there did not obtain, between the ideal world and the real world, a sort of

pre-established harmony." The poetic effort is ever to comprehend and fully recognize this harmony, and give expression to it. It is in this endeavour that the objective world yields to the poetic representation. It is the production of Wordsworth's definition of the inspired art,—the description of things, not as they are, but as they seem, and, it might be added, as we would wish them to be. The old philosophers, Pythagoras and Plato for instance, formed their theories in this poetical kind; for their philosophy was, after all, only poetry in disguise. Pythagoras, with his music of the spheres; Plato, with his sad recollections of a happier state of being, both exemplify the identity of feeling which formerly existed between those who loved wisdom and those who sought the beautiful; and this alliance between poetry and philosophy is not yet broken off. The points of contact where they meet are daily becoming multiplied; the workers in the field of science often find themselves almost unconsciously following a track marked with the footsteps of the poet. Both are dealing with things of which at best they can know "only in part, and prophesy in part." The poor Greek strove to hear that music which man hath never heard, nor can ever hear while in this vesture of clay. But the inspiration of his thought was a noble one, and it was no mean legacy that Pythagoras left to the Poets.

W. B.

MY FELLOW-CLERK.

LODGINGS in Copenhagen are scarce and dear, are always unfurnished, and must be taken for long terms and from particular days. Part of this inconvenience is due to custom, part to absurd police regulations; but the result is to make the Danish capital anything but an agreeable place of residence for young men of moderate means. And on that account I had thought myself exceedingly lucky in being permitted to be a member of the household of my employer, M. Hansen, of the firm of Hansen and Hoyer, merchants.

Hansen and Hoyer did a great deal of business in the export trade. They dealt with Russia, Sweden, and Pomerania, as well as with London and New York; and it is wonderful in how many commercial pies the house had contrived to insert a finger, never without profit, as their books could prove. I, their only English clerk—all the rest being Danes, except a middle-aged Frenchman, with a wig and a gold eye-glass, who lived at the *Hôtel des Empereurs*,—was also the only clerk who resided under the roof of the senior partner. M. Hansen was married, of course, and his wife was an English lady; his whole family consisted of a son, Karl, and a daughter, Margaret—an extremely pretty girl. As for myself, I was then about twenty-four years of age, and had been two years at Copenhagen, whither I had been sent more with a view to acquiring the Continental method of doing business, than with any reference to salary. Indeed, I was regarded rather as a pupil than as a regular *employé* of the firm; though Hansen and Hoyer *did* keep me pretty hard at work too, what with invoices, manifests, and letters.

When I first heard that a new clerk, a countryman of my own, was coming out from England to take his place at the desk and in the family circle, I was rather glad than otherwise. There are but few English residents at Copenhagen, and my opportunities for speaking my native tongue were scanty. The Danes, it is true, are excellent linguists; and M. Hansen could speak very pure English when he chose, but he seldom did choose; while Margaret talked Danish to please her father, of whom she was very fond. Karl was a thorough Scandinavian; and even Madame Hansen, though in the course of her twenty-three years' residence in Denmark she had never been able to acquire the difficult pronunciation of the northern language, still tried hard to conform to every habit of her husband's country. I was, therefore, not sorry that a compatriot of my own, necessarily ignorant of Danish, was about to join us, and the rather because I should probably find my task of the London correspondence considerably lightened thereby.

There was one misgiving, and one only, in my mind, when I learned that Mr. Charles Simpkins—that was the name of the new clerk—was to be a member of the Hansen household. I was somewhat apprehensive of

the effect which this new comer, fresh from a city which the Danes naturally regard as Babylon the Great, might produce on Margaret's imagination; for I loved Margaret dearly, and had loved her long, and hoped that I should, when my probation was over, bear away that fresh, sweet Danish rosebud to my own English home. I was pretty well off, I ought to say, as regarded worldly prospects, since my father was a thriving merchant at Hull, and I was to be a partner in the firm as soon as Hansen and Hoyer pronounced me a perfect adept in all the mysteries of book-keeping, correspondence, and underwriting. My father was concerned in the Baltic trade, and it was of the greatest importance to our firm that one, at least, of its members should have an intimate knowledge of that part of the world of traffic which lies beyond the stormy Skager Rack.

The letter, however, which M. Hansen showed me, and which was written by the new comer's uncle, Mr. Grantley, of Nunn and Grantley, Thames Street, the old and staunch correspondents of the Danish house, reassured me immensely. Mr. Grantley made it a special request that his nephew, for whom he seemed to entertain a sort of kindly contempt, should be kept to hard work in a manner that should "take the nonsense out of him." It appeared that Mr. Charles Simpkins was the son of a clergyman in Suffolk; that he had been somewhat spoiled at home, as the idol of half a dozen elder sisters and an affectionate mother; and that he bade fair to turn into an entirely useless member of society. His uncle admitted that he was a very good young man, amiable, gentle, and well-conducted, though not the genius he fancied himself; but it seemed that he played the flute, wrote mawkish poetry, and esteemed himself a Byronic hero—all sins of the first magnitude in the eyes of his gruff relative, who was a hard-headed man of business.

So the rich uncle, to whom the Suffolk vicar and his family were under great obligations, and of whom they evidently stood in awe, had insisted that his nephew should do something "to earn his own living in a creditable way;" and as there happened to be no vacant stool just then in the counting-house of Nunn and Grantley, the young man had been consigned to the tutelage of Hansen and Hoyer, who were to receive a fair premium for teaching him all that related to tallow, timber, methylated spirits, Riga hemp, Seeland oats, and Jutland hides.

"I shall put the poor fellow under your charge, Brooks, out of office hours; for, of course, old M. Adolphe must be his mentor in the counting-house. I trust to you to see he gets into no scrapes, and to protect him against undue quizzing or practical jokes on the part of our youngsters, who are a little rough at times, as you know, though good-hearted lads in the main."

This was true enough: the young Danes, many of them country-bred youths, who were seated, during office hours, at the many desks in Hansen and Hoyer's counting-house, were inclined to be a little boisterous and fond of horse-play, like their Viking ancestors, when the staid elder clerks

were out of the room. They had also a turn for caricaturing and burlesquing any personal foible or peculiarity in their compeers, and especially in a stranger. Well-meaning as they were, it was rather awkward work for a new comer who was sensitive or timid to endure the ordeal of his novitiate. I had fared well enough, having luckily learned, as a public schoolboy, the use of my fists and tongue. From the day when I was fortunate enough to give a back fall to Simon Bugge, of Laaland, a big young islander, who was disposed to play the bully, I was voted by acclamation an honorary member of the guild of clerks. This aforesaid Simon Bugge took the lead socially in our counting-house. His ugly name, which, in Norse etymology, has reference, not to bloodsuckers, but to building, created no prejudice against him; on the contrary, to be a Bugge was his chief claim to distinction among us, since his surname belonged to a house which all genealogists acknowledged, in common with other bluff monosyllables, to be "Aldgammel," or one of the antique untitled nobility of Denmark. But this very Simon, for whom I had proved an over-match in wrestling and repartee, was somewhat given to hector over the weakly, shy boys who sometimes joined us, and I feared that Simpkins would be just the butt to suit him. However, I resolved to do my best to protect and encourage the poor fellow.

"The house frau and the demoiselle wait tea for you, sare," cried a shrill Danish female voice, through the keyhole of my door, as I sat musing at the open window. "De ozer Inglis gentleman shall have come just now."

In response to good old Sophie's summons, I hastened down to the "parloir," so called, where a tall silver samovar, one of those things which the richer of Copenhagen residents have borrowed from their Russian neighbours, and where steaming and fragrant tea, cranberry jelly, fresh Norway strawberries, cream—such as only Denmark and Holland produce,—with an unwonted display of cakes, fish, and fowl, evinced that the quiet family meal had been hastily added to for the purpose of appeasing the hunger of the fasting new comer. That new comer was there, of course, in the high tide of conversation with both the ladies, rattling, chattering, and producing more peals of silver laughter from Margaret's sweet lips than I had ever heard before in so brief a space of time.

"Mr. Brooks, let me introduce to you the new member of our family circle, Mr. Charles Simpkins. Do, pray, Mr. Simpkins, try that cold fowl; we are famous for chickens in Seeland. You cannot have had anything to eat since you left Jutland; and I am sure, though you are too polite to say so, that you must be half starved," said worthy Madame Hansen, piling buttered cake and short-cake lavishly on her guest's plate, while her daughter poured out his tea—such tea as we never see in England, the fine Russian caravan tea, brought overland from China, at about sixteen shillings a pound. For my part, I stared at my fellow-clerk, forgetting my good manners in my curiosity, and utterly at a loss to account for the

singular description which his uncle had been pleased to pen, of a nephew of whom most uncles, as it seemed to me, might have been proud.

Instead of the clumsy, conceited, bashful hobbledohoy whom I had pictured to myself, I beheld a strapping fellow of six or seven and twenty, as I guessed, with a flashing eye, crisp, curling, dark hair, and a handsome, merry face; a thought reckless, perhaps, but very pleasing in feature and expression. The new clerk was very well dressed, rather over-jewelled, as I thought, but attired in a way that served to set off his showy person remarkably well. He had a bold, soldierly air, an ease of manner that I was angry with myself for envying, a flow of airy, joyous talk, and the most irresistible laugh I ever heard. The Hansen ladies were not, I dare say, the easiest people in the world for a stranger to get on with. Margaret was rather proud and reserved, and Madame was apt to be a little absent, her mind running much on household cares and duties; while her very efforts to play the part of a Danish matron, *pur sang*, imparted a constraint to her bearing. And yet in ten minutes Mr. Simpkins had contrived to fascinate them both.

M. Hansen was out, and Karl was spending the evening with some young friends of the boat club; so we four were alone together. But had there been forty present instead of four, I do not think that the new recruit to the counting-house of Hansen and Hoyer would have been abashed by the number of strangers who might be criticizing his manners and address. Throughout the repast he rattled gaily on, now telling us the last scrap of news, social or political, from London; now telling humorous little anecdotes of curious things he had observed, or odd adventures he had met with, on his journey from the Suffolk parsonage to Copenhagen. He made us listen; he made us laugh, whether we wished it or no. And yet, such was his tact, he never seemed unduly to monopolize the conversation, and when most amusing appeared least egotistical. No wonder that I looked at him in half-incredulous amazement, and asked myself mentally whether this were really the raw bumpkin whose protector and adviser I had been appointed by the head of the firm.

Quite late that evening there came a tap at my door, just as I was kicking off my boots, and the curly dark hair and glittering eyes of my fellow-countryman were protruded into the room.

"Beg your pardon, Mr. Brooks, may I come in? If you are not sleepy, and could spare me half an hour, I should enjoy a chat. Thanks! Are those your cigars on the chimney-piece beyond the Prussian stove? Will you try mine?" (producing a yellow leather case, full of Havannahs that a king might have smoked); "they are called Barclay's best, and Barclay would not deceive me."

We smoked for some moments in silence, my own thoughts being busy with the strange incongruities between the portrait of the new comer as traced by his uncle, Mr. Grantley, of Thames Street, and the young man himself. What Mr. Simpkins may have been thinking of I can

possibly guess now, but at that time I had no sort of clue to his meditations. For some time, therefore, we puffed in silence at our cigars, which we were allowed by the rule of Danish domestic discipline to consume in our own rooms, but not where ladies were to be met with, since the Danes are less addicted to tobacco, and less tolerant of its use, than either the Dutch or the Germans. At last Simpkins spoke, no longer fluently, but in short, measured sentences, broken by whiffs of his cigar. His words were fewer and his manner graver than before; and, had I been less certain of the birth, parentage, and education of my interlocutor than I was, I should have said he was fishing for information, and trying in a guarded fashion to learn how matters stood with those who were to be his daily companions.

"Two years, Mr. Brooks—that's a long time; time enough to get a good knowledge of Denmark and its ways. I wonder how long my uncle's fancy will keep *me* here? Perhaps two years—perhaps twenty! Uncles—that is, rich uncles—are such despots."

He then went on to tell me that he had been considered, from the very cradle, as his uncle Grantley's adopted heir; that the first lesson impressed on his infant mind had had reference to the propriety of pleasing the wealthy merchant, but that by some ill luck he had generally managed to give fresh offence to this rich and irritable relative at each of the latter's rare visits to the Suffolk parsonage.

"But then," remarked Mr. Simpkins, smiling philosophically, "I am such a thoughtless fellow. I never shall learn prudence. Sister Gerty said so when I upset the currant jelly over my uncle's white ducks, some fifteen Septembers since. I very narrowly escaped being scratched out of his will that time, as I have heard from his solicitor. Always the same—careless, blundering—"

"Poets are privileged to be careless," interrupted I, half maliciously, and not quite sure whether I had not touched a tender spot, or whether my new comrade might resent or feel embarrassed by any allusion to his rhyming tendencies. He did certainly give a little start, and a very slight look of annoyance darkened his handsome face; but it passed like a shadow from a mirror, and he was as good-humoured as ever when he laughingly confessed that he had promised Mr. Grantley not to meddle with the Muse, nor to write poetry, while engaged in mercantile pursuits,—"not a line," he said, emphatically, and then heaved a little sigh.

Very quickly, with his wonted tact, he contrived to turn the conversation, and drew from me, with a rapidity that surprised myself, almost every detail of my ordinary life at Copenhagen, the characters and pursuits of the family and members of the firm, and so forth. On one subject, and one only, I was dumb. My sentiments towards Margaret, and my hope that those sentiments might to some degree be reciprocal, were too sacred in my eyes to be made the theme of discourse with even the pleasantest of companions. But I doubt if the secret remained a

secret to my fellow-clerk, for there was a knowing twinkle in his bright hazel eyes as he remarked what a lucky fellow I ought to be esteemed in being lodged under the same roof with pretty Mademoiselle Hansen. However, his chief interest seemed to lie, strange to say, in those very business details which I should have imagined would have proved so dry and distasteful to him. He seemed never to weary of talking about Hansen and Hoyer, their commercial connection, their wealth, and the sources from which they drew it. He was quite interested in the information that Russian merchants commonly paid the balance over in hard dollars and roubles, while Germany settled accounts with bills and notes, and Sweden preferred actual barter. He was evidently anxious to know every detail of our traffic, for which he accounted thus:—

“You see, Mr. Brooks, it’s a motto with me, when I do a thing, to do it thoroughly. It has been settled by the elders that I should ‘go in,’ as the phrase is, for commerce, and I may as well see my way, and know something of my new vocation. Perhaps uncle Grantley may relent; but if not, I mean to try and become a model clerk. I really am ashamed of keeping you up so long. Twelve o’clock already! Good night, my dear sir.”

And off went Mr. Charles Simpkins, leaving on me an uncomfortable impression to the effect that I had been pumped dry of such information as I possessed, though for what reason I could by no means conjecture.

I do not desire to dwell upon the events of the next few days, during which Mr. Simpkins gave fresh proofs of the versatile powers with which he was endowed. That he was not bullied by the clerks it is hardly needful to say. Simon Bugge certainly made one or two attempts to turn the new comer into ridicule; but though the freshman spoke no Danish, he proved such a master of repartee in English and French, that the laugh was soon turned against his clumsy tormentor. And as for manual retaliation, Herr Simon had sense enough to perceive that a gentleman who could jump the sunk fence that skirted the warehouse, and lift the great table that only Bugge and myself had ever managed, and that with much difficulty, to upheave, and bend the office poker across his knee, was likely to be more than a match for himself. No wonder that Mr. Simpkins became a sort of hero in the clerks’ room, as any bold, muscular fellow is sure to do; but what really astonished me was the ardour with which he addressed himself to business. M. Adolphe, the old cashier, was not usually very partial to strangers, but he was loud in praise of the new comer’s assiduity and ability. It was wonderful, it was astonishing, he said, that Mr. Simpkins, who had never been in a counting-house before, mastered the details of business as he did, and displayed such a genius for arithmetic. Most young men, even after years of training, left, as the Frenchman observed, “*beaucoup à désirer* ;” but in the case of our new recruit, wholly untried in commerce, *parole d’honneur*, it was marvellous!

I was by no means so satisfied with my countryman as M. Adolphe chose to be. It was not that I was jealous of his popularity among the clerks, or that I grudged him the cashier's good word and the approval of his employer; but I saw with dismay that Margaret, my pretty Margaret, between whom and myself a sort of tacit engagement, pledged more by eyes than words, had hitherto existed, was fascinated by this new and attractive guest. There was no use in disguising the fact. The brilliant Simpkins had thrown plain Walter Brooks into the shade; and though I felt jealous and mortified, I could not but own that the intruder was possessed of many accomplishments unknown to me. The new clerk was a clever fellow, a sprightly talker, a good musician, singing well, playing at all games, conjuring, as if he had been apprenticed to a juggler, and never being at a loss for topics of conversation. My wonder was how such an Admirable Crichton had ever been reared in a quiet country parsonage; but it is not surprising that Margaret and Madame Hansen agreed in regarding the new inmate of their house as a phoenix, and that the former should begin to draw unflattering comparisons between myself and my gifted countryman. Under these circumstances I became morose and miserable, sat silent in a corner for hours, while Mr. Simpkins was at Margaret's side, gaily chatting, singing Italian bravura songs, or performing all manner of variations on the piano. I retired moodily to my own room, while my supplanter, as I deemed him, in the affections of my Danish beauty, had a clear field before him; and while he won the good opinions of Mr. and Madame Hansen, I took long country walks, thinking, with a heavy heart, how soon my own favour had been eclipsed by the brilliancy of this new favourite.

In one of these walks it was that I suddenly encountered the junior partner, Mr. Hoyer, who was driving in from a small villa which he owned a league from Copenhagen, and where he spent much of his leisure among his Dutch tulips and quaint, old-fashioned roses. Mr. Hoyer was an old bachelor,—a quiet personage with a fondness for horticulture, but a keen man of business. He had been for some time absent in Germany and the Baltic provinces of Russia, and this was the first time of our meeting since his return. He greeted me cordially, for I had always stood well with him, and offered me a lift as far as Copenhagen. To refuse would have been churlish, so I complied with the proffer, much as in my present temper I preferred solitude; and we jogged along the sandy road, amid the croaking of the bull-frogs, in silence for some time.

"Brooks," said Mr. Hoyer, abruptly, "how do you like that new Adonis from England, the Herr Simpkins? I have only seen him once, and that was last evening, when I dropped in for an hour at Hansen's house, and when, by-the-bye, you had gone to bed, having a bad headache, eh?" And I thought Mr. Hoyer's eyes, as they surveyed me over the tops of his spectacles, had a knowing twinkle in them, and I dare say I reddened as they met mine.

"When I was a lad," said the good-natured merchant, "it was not thought a wise course to leave the field quite clear to a rival in a young lady's affections; but I suppose folks know better nowadays. However," went on the worthy old gentleman, who was Hansen's senior in years, though not in standing, "I don't want to plague you unnecessarily, and so I may as well tell you that I don't believe Mr. Simpkins has any more intention of paying court to Mademoiselle Margaret than I have. It's his way, evidently, to make himself agreeable to every one. Why, he began to talk of flowers, and bulbs, and grafting to me; having got a hint, no doubt, of my mania for a garden. But I laughed in my sleeve, for I soon saw that the youngster knew nothing of the subject. I'll tell you what it is, Brooks,—I don't like that compatriot of yours, and I don't believe he's sincere. He is playing a part, though why I do not know and cannot guess; but such is the case, or my name's not Frederick Hoyer."

Much startled by this avowal—for it was the first time that I had heard anything but praise of our new friend—I asked Mr. Hoyer on what grounds he based his unfavourable opinion of the Englishman. But the former's dislike to the latter seemed rather the result of instinct than of reason, and he was obliged to own that he had heard nothing but good of the new comer, of whom old Adolphe, the cashier, a trusty servant of the firm these forty years, spoke in high terms. One remark of Mr. Hoyer's certainly did strike me much, chiming, as it did, with a preconceived impression of my own which I had hitherto set down to mere prejudice. Mr. Hoyer observed that, in the midst of all his merry flow of talk, the English clerk was restless, thoughtful, and ever ready to turn his head and listen to any sudden sound, such as the slamming of a door, the peal of a bell, or the roll of wheels. I had noticed this, but never had I recalled the peculiarity to my memory as vividly as when Mr. Hoyer mentioned that he, too, had been struck by it.

It was still early when we drove into Copenhagen, for I had risen at sunrise, and had started for my walk while the mist yet hung over the canals, and while the guelder roses and shrubs of the suburban gardens were still heavy with the night dews. The merchant set me down at the corner of the street where Mr. Hansen lived, and drove on to his own town residence—a second floor in one of the huge old brick and timber palaces built by bygone nobles, and now let out as lodgings. There was still an hour to spare before office hours.

"By the way," said Mr. Hoyer, at parting, "if you get to the counting-house before me, Brooks, I wish you would speak to M. Adolphe about paying the money which I brought from Russia into the bank. It makes me nervous to think of such an amount in specie lying in the office, though I was glad enough to consign it to our cashier's safe keeping when I got here yesterday evening."

A minute more, and I was at home. I found the whole family assem-

bled round the breakfast-table, but there was one member of our circle deficient; Mr. Charles Simpkins, hitherto the most punctual of mortals, was absent. Of this, however, I thought little; and when, after waiting for ten minutes or so, Mr. Hansen sent one of the servants to tap at the slug-gard's door, we all sat down cheerily to the morning meal. Coffee and cream, cakes and fruit, the salmon from Norway, and the Jutland plovers' eggs began to wane as the breakfast progressed, but my fellow-clerk did not arrive to put in any claim to a share in those delicacies. And Trud-chen came back to say that she had knocked at the English herr's door till her fingers ached, but had received no reply. The door was locked, and there was no sound to indicate that the occupant of the chamber was stirring. Mr. Hansen pushed aside his plate and cup.

"The young Englander must be ill," said he; "such sound rest cannot be natural. I will go up-stairs at once, and——But what is this? Donner! what a noise!"

An awful noise there was, a noise of trampling feet and shouting voices; and in a moment more a number of excited men came tearing down the street, and began knocking at the merchant's door as if they would drive it in. Most of these men, as I could see when I jumped from my chair and ran to the window, were packers, porters, messengers, and other persons in the employ of the firm; but at their head was a stout, elderly man, whose frantic gestures gave him the air of a madman, and in whom I was amazed to recognize our staid cashier, M. Adolphe.

The ladies screamed; and, indeed, this unexpected apparition foreboded evil. Mr. Hansen threw open the window, and asked what had occurred. There was a hoarse shout of "Thieves!" and then the sturdy fellows doffed their red caps, and began awkwardly to sidle and nudge one another, evidently at a loss for words to explain what was amiss. But M. Adolphe, still breathless from the unwonted rapidity of his course, panted out,—

"De par tous les diables, Monsieur, it is the truth these honest men speak. Thieves. Yes, thieves; and of such an infernal audacity, of such artful cunning, that they have baffled all my precautions, and—ah! morbleu! it is too true, M. Hansen—the cash-box is stolen."

"The cash-box?" asked the merchant, half incredulously; "was it not secured in the safe, as is the custom? My good M. Adolphe, I can hardly credit—" But he in his turn was interrupted by the excited old clerk, who actually wept as he related how he had carefully locked the safe as usual, the rather because of the large sum in gold which M. Hoyer had brought in, just as the office was about to be closed. The cashier had placed this heavy rouleau of gold in the cash-box, had locked the box, and securely stowed it away in the great iron safe, the key of which he wore on a steel chain that was round his neck by day, and under his pillow at night. On going to the office in the morning, a little earlier than usual, as there were arrears of work to do in his department, M. Adolphe had

found with horror that the safe was open, gaping, as he expressed it, like an oyster, and the money gone. The porters declared that they had found the counting-house, contrary to all rule, unlocked. That it had been locked the evening before was certain, and that the robber, whoever he was, had let himself in by the aid of a skeleton key was manifest. It was only too evident that the large sum which Mr. Hoyer had brought back from Russia, and the loss of which would seriously damage the firm, was gone, and probably beyond recovery.

Mr. Hansen was a strong-minded, even-tempered personage in general, but now he sank down in a chair, hid his face, and groaned aloud. His wife and daughter clung fondly to him, and their whispered words of womanly consolation lent him strength to shake off the bitterness of the pain. He rose, and managed to smile, as he hushed the well-meant clamour of the subordinates, and even calmed down poor M. Adolphe's agitation in some degree. The latter worthy man was in a pitiable state of mind; he seemed to consider his reputation as a cashier tarnished for ever by the loss of a treasure in his keeping, though there could be no doubt that he had been as careful a custodian as any fallible mortal could be. At last a thought struck the merchant.

"You say, Adolphe, that you closed the safe very late, after all the clerks had gone home, and while the messengers were putting up the shutters and closing the doors; was it not so?"

Yes, that had been the case, M. Adolphe declared. No one was left in his own part of the office except Mr. Simpkins, who was there when M. Hoyer entered with the cash, and stayed, most obligingly, to copy a letter in the book. He and M. Adolphe had quitted the office together.

"Ah! just so!" said Mr. Hansen, thoughtfully. "And Mr. Simpkins does not take his place among us at table, for the first time, this morning. If—but it is hardly possible."

And the merchant, with a darkening brow and a hasty step, left the room and hurried up-stairs. Soon we heard him calling for help, for a hatchet, a crowbar, anything to burst open the door of the English clerk's room. I ran up at his summons, and our joint strength forced the door from its hinges. The merchant's worst suspicions were realized. The room was empty. The bed had not been slept in. The bird had flown, and by a natural inference, Mr. Charles Simpkins was the plunderer of the counting-house, the robber of the cash-box. But we could hardly trust the evidence of our senses; that a young man of such respectable parentage and education, the son of a vicar and nephew of the second partner in the well-known house of Nunn and Grantley, should have played a prank worthy of Jack Sheppard, seemed scarcely credible. And we were still puzzled, too much surprised even to think of pursuit, when a carriage rattled up to the house, and a young gentleman getting out of it, feebly enough, and leaning on the arm of a stout, shrewd-faced man of middle age, rang the door-bell, and asked for the merchant, sending in his card;

at which Mr. Hansen stared blankly, and no wonder, for the name inscribed on the card was "Mr. Charles Simpkins."

The whole truth came out at last. The tall, sandy-haired, awkward youngster before us, very pale and hollow-cheeked, poor lad, and with evident signs of illness in his face and gait, was the real owner of the name of Simpkins, and the real nephew of Mr. Grantley of Thames Street. He had started, weeks before, from England, but on his way to Copenhagen had unluckily been taken ill of a dangerous fever at Hamburg; and too suddenly to have time to write to his relatives or to Mr. Hansen. In this strait he had been, as he said, kindly cared for by a gentlemanly stranger, whose acquaintance he had made two days before, on his journey across Germany, and who had called in a doctor, and shown him considerable attention at the beginning of his malady. Then he had been delirious, and when he recovered his senses he found a Sister of Charity by his bedside, and the kind stranger was seen no more. It was not until his convalescence that he discovered that his desk and portmanteau had been ransacked, and most of his papers stolen, while he lay helpless and unconscious. It was easy to guess that these papers had been purloined by the stranger, whose description tallied with that of the false Simpkins.

"And to cut a long story short," broke in the stout man, "I'm Sergeant Bush, of the London police, and my business abroad is to apprehend the very individual that we're talking of. A desperate offender he is, and wanted on twenty warrants. His real name nobody knows. He was respectably bred, and, more shame for him, but he usually goes by the name of 'the Prince,' among his pals. I don't wonder he's garmented you, for he's uncommonly well-spoken; and to act the part of this young gent here was a clever game, after all. But let's try and catch him, though I'm afraid it's no go."

And so it turned out. Two days elapsed before we could even ascertain the fact, that the fictitious Mr. Simpkins had taken his passage to Hamburg in a small coasting steamer, and that he had so timed his flight as to embark on board the New York packet. All trace of him and his booty was lost from that time forth. The loss of the large sum of money carried off by the impostor was a heavy blow to Hansen and Hoyer, but they tided over the season of trouble, assisted, for my sake, by my own relatives in England. I have long been a partner in the house of Hansen, Hoyer, and Brooks, and Margaret has long been my wife.

THE BRACCOON.

A LOUISIANA INCIDENT.

IN sailing from Galveston to New Orleans, and keeping close to the Louisiana coast, you will notice, ere you reach the principal mouth of the Mississippi, in the midst of a dense forest, an opening which seems to be formed by the outpour of a lake or bayou. This gap in the bushes leads to Barataria Bay, which, at the beginning of the present century, was notorious as the lurking-place of a dangerous band of pirates, the last remnants of those bloodthirsty bucaniers, who in earlier times laid waste the West India islands and the coasts of the continent. Here lurked the celebrated or notorious Lafitte, whom Lord Byron took as his model in "The Corsair," and whose powerful assistance General Jackson did not despise in the battle of New Orleans. What afterwards became of the pirate, who was "graced by one virtue 'mid a thousand faults," we are unaware; or whether it is true that his adjutant and comrade eventually became distinguished as a learned theologian at Cambridge, as is currently reported and believed in Louisiana.

So much is certain, that about the year 1855, a M. Eugene Lafitte, a descendant of the West Indian Viking, possessed the best plantation on Barataria Bay, and was held in great respect by his neighbours on account of his wealth, in spite of his stern, obstinate character. In Eugene there was not one spark of that magnanimity shown by his ancestor when he once granted life to a treacherous friend, who tried to earn the reward set on the pirate's head, and overwhelmed him with kindnesses into the bargain; and in the whole district there was not a master who so ill-treated and exhausted his slaves as he did. In the poor helpless negro he, contrary to the more humane views of the creoles, only saw a working machine, which must be employed till worn out, and then thrown away like a squeezed lemon. He did not recognize family ties among his numerous slaves, and it never occurred to him to have the slightest consideration when he had a chance of buying or selling black workmen advantageously. That, under such circumstances, he only chose overseers who acted exactly in accordance with his inhuman ideas, can be easily assumed, and we can as easily understand that the laws which had been passed in Louisiana for the protection of the slaves were only a dead letter to such a rich and influential planter.

The country round Barataria Bay displays a rich vegetation, and offers a wondrous variety of wood, water, prairie, and swamp, covered with broad-leaved plants. Further inland rises a chain of low hills, from which a stream, overshadowed by tall sycamores and cedars, known as Black Creek, falls into the narrow arm of the sea which formerly served the piratical flotilla as a hiding-place. On this stream stood M. Lafitte's two-storied verandahed house, before whose south side stretched out a

magnificent flower-garden, which was enclosed by a green-painted wire fence. At the extreme end of it was a tolerably large pond, hidden in a thick coppice of orange trees, magnolias, and bignonias, which was fed from Black Creek by means of a broad ditch. At the point where the latter entered the pond there was a strong iron grating, acting as a species of sluice, to prevent the disgusting and dangerous creatures that populate all waters in Louisiana from entering the pond. On the whole of the plantation there was assuredly no cooler or more shady spot than this fragrant wood by the tranquil water; and even the planter, who was not greatly affected by beauties of nature, spent many a hot afternoon here, swinging in his hammock, reading the papers, or thinking over the prices of sugar and cotton, amid the blue cloud of an Havannah cigar.

Close to the garden, on both sides of the creek, tobacco fields extended for many a mile towards the south, up to the point where the ground made a sudden dip, and a broad fresh-water lagoon connected with the stream offered insurmountable obstacles to the cultivation of the soil at certain seasons of the year; white-blossoming nymphæas, with their greasy, large, heart-shaped leaves, covered the swamp; and the varieties of *Nelumbium* floating close together appeared, with their green ramifications, like a carpet, so that any unsuspecting wayfarer, unacquainted with the region, might feel tempted to walk across it, little suspecting the destruction that lurked below, in the sharp jaws of greedy alligators. Swarms of these savage beasts lived in the blackish brown lagoon, watching for the fish that swam up from the creek at high water; and when a dog or other domestic animal gave a cry on the narrow path that ran between the tobacco plantation and the swamp close to the edge of the latter, the entire lagoon became alive, and from under the leafy awning shot out dozens of scaly monsters towards the bank. Attempts had frequently been made to expel the greedy brutes from the neighbourhood, because now and then a pig, which led its young down to drink, fell a victim to them; but it was difficult to get at them in their lurking-places, as they do not care much for a rifle bullet, and rarely venture ashore. It is true that an enterprising Yankee had proposed to M. Lafitte to poison them with strychnine, and then a quantity of stearine could be collected from their colossal carcasses. But the suspicious Southerner, who most heartily detested the New Englanders, did not accept the strange proposal, and was satisfied if one of his overseers at times killed a scaly monster by a bullet in the eye.

The planter had been a widower for many years, and some of his acquaintances—for friends he had none—were of opinion that the hardness of his character had become visible in all its intensity after the loss of his wife, whom he had dearly loved. The deceased, a Frenchwoman, whose acquaintance the young man had formed during a short visit to Paris, died of the yellow fever, after only two years' residence in Louisiana, to the great grief of her slaves, whose fate she sought to alleviate by the greatest indulgence, because the entire system was repugnant to her European

ideas. The only fruit of this marriage was a very promising daughter, christened *Blanche*, whom her father took to *St. Louis* when she reached her eighth year, in order to have her suitably educated at the *Institute of the Grey Sisters* in that city. On this child all his affection was concentrated, and when he heaped up riches on riches by the inhuman exhaustion of his negroes, he did so, as he said, in order hereafter to render *Blanche* the most coveted heiress in the State.

The young creole had at length completed her fourteenth year,—an age at which these prematurely ripe daughters of Southern latitudes are accustomed to enter society; and her father now considered the time arrived when she should cheer his solitary existence by her presence. Before he went to *St. Louis* to fetch *Blanche*, the whole house was subjected to a thorough repair, and filled with every conceivable luxury, in order to receive the young mistress worthily.

It was on a lovely summer evening, when all the slaves belonging to the plantation assembled in front of the verandah to pay their respects to *M. Lafitte* and his companion, whose return home was hourly expected. A half-holiday had been granted them for this purpose, and the slaves had employed it in cleaning and decorating themselves to the best of their ability. The poor negroes wished to produce a favourable impression on their mistress, because they instinctively hoped that she, like her deceased mother, would intercede to procure some indulgence for the old and sickly. Even the aged *Urrica*, who was supposed to be a hundred years old, had left her hut—which stood in a palmetto thicket on the neighbouring hill—in order to welcome the granddaughter of the celebrated pirate who had stolen her. Her present master, who generally acted on the principle of selling worn-out slaves at any price, and substituting fresh hands for them, had made an exception in her case, and granted her the bread of charity,—ostensibly out of respect for her forefathers, but in reality from other reasons. Although the planter pretended to be a thorough rationalist, and frequently gave himself out as a partisan of *Voltaire* and *Tom Paine*, he was secretly governed by the most ignorant superstition, like all creoles; and old *Urrica* frightened him, because she was supposed to be versed in all sorts of wicked arts, and the whole neighbourhood believed that she could cause great mischief with the “evil eye” when she was offended. All her descendants had perished on the plantation under her eyes, and she had not shed a single tear; and now only one grandson was left her, a powerful, intelligent negro of the name of *Shocko*, to whom she was sincerely attached. He had married—if we can use the term in connection with slaves,—and was father of two pretty little black boys, who were in the habit of playing about merrily with the young dogs and pigs among the negro huts, as they were too young to be set to work.

At length the carriage which had fetched *M. Lafitte* and his daughter from the landing-place of the steamer drove up, and the assembled slaves greeted the new arrivals with a loud shout; while the two overseers, dressed

in their go-to-meeting clothes, opened the door, and assisted the travellers in getting out. The planter's face was gloomy and imperious as usual; and after giving a hurried salute with his hand, and conducting Blanche into the house, he came out again on the verandah, and began a shower of violent abuse.

"You lazy black scoundrels!—only wait! You have not tasted the whip during my absence. As I came along I saw how scandalously you have been working. Is that husbandry, to allow so many weeds to grow among the sugar-canes? And the cotton is rotting in the pods."

When the two overseers tried to justify themselves, and declared that they were not to blame, but that the negroes had been the whole time obstinate and lazy, and that they considered Shooko—whom they could not bear, on account of his manly character—the leader, the planter's fury knew no bounds. He took the heavy carriage whip from its case, and struck the poor negro several blows across the face, so that heavy drops of blood rolled down it; and would have continued the punishment, had not Blanche, who had come to the window, begged him, with tears in her eyes, to check his passion, and come in to her. The negroes slunk away sadly to their huts, and Shooko tottered with swollen and blinded eyes by his grandmother's side to the adjacent stream, in order to cool his burning face in the water; while the two overseers were warned by their master to display increased severity.

The life on the plantation certainly assumed a different character after Blanche's arrival, but the fate of the slaves was not improved by it; for Lafitte, though on other matters most indulgent to his daughter, told her, once for all, that she understood nothing of the circumstances, and had better keep her compassion for her white fellow-beings. In spite of all the amusements which her father tried to procure her, in spite of the numerous visits which the neighbouring gentry paid to the planter's house, in order to offer their homage to the lovely young heiress, she felt lonely and unhappy, and had a species of foreboding that something terrible was about to happen. The rough, money-graving planter had of course no idea that there is something besides wealth and luxury by which our satisfaction is regulated; and thus he did not suppose for a moment that Blanche, for whom he made every possible pecuniary sacrifice, was affected most deeply by the scenes of barbarity which she was daily compelled to witness. Though the planter was generally so affectionate and indulgent to his daughter, he treated her most roughly when she ventured to utter a word on behalf of the ill-used slaves; and hence the result was that she held her tongue. This silence, however, was regarded by the negroes, who had hoped such great things from her presence on the plantation, as a tacit approval of her father's hardness, and was destined to entail fearful consequences.

One day, Daly, one of the two overseers, came into the verandah at the moment when Lafitte was receiving guests, and announced that a

mule, which had not been properly harnessed, had broken its leg at the cotton press. The planter furiously inquired the name of the culprit, and when he heard it was Shocco, he ordered him to be punished in the most barbarous way. The poor wretch's thumbs were fastened together with a thin cord, and the latter was drawn so tight over a nail driven into a tree about eight feet from the ground, that the negro's toes alone touched the earth. In this torturing position the negro was flogged on the bare back with the heavy whip till life seemed to be extinct, and the ground round his feet was literally dyed with blood. He was then taken down and dragged to the calebouse, where he was to pass eight days on bread and water, till his wounds were healed again. But this was not his hardest punishment. Probably Shocco, with his innate stoicism, would have got over the unjust punishment, but matters turned out differently; and the unhappy negro learnt a further experience, which utterly confused his ideas about right and wrong, and imparted to him the desire for vengeance which is felt by a tiger that has been robbed of its whelps.

It happened that a slave-dealer from Georgia came into those parts, for the purpose of completing his stock of black chattels, as he had a commission to supply a newly established plantation in Savannah with negroes. He called in at Laftie's, because he often had dealings with him; and the planter, whose wrath against Shocco had been continually augmented by the insinuations of the overseers, had the inhuman idea of selling Dinah his wife and his two children to the Georgian.

"What a face the cursed nigger will cut," he thought, with devilish malice, "when he learns, as soon as he comes out of the calebouse, that his black squaw and her two picaninnies are 'over the hills and far away'!"

The bargain was settled, and the unhappy wife could not even obtain permission to see her husband in prison for the last time.

Who could depict the feelings which agitated Shocco's breast when he left the prison with a hardly healed back and heavy heart, and made the discovery that his family had been eternally torn from him! But the planter's categorical orders, and the threatening whip of his enemy Daly, left him no time to give vent to his feelings by complaining and weeping. He was at once ordered back to the cotton press. Here he tried to learn from his fellow-slaves to what place Dinah had been taken with her children, as he was already revolving schemes for flight; but they could tell him no more than that the dealer had gone with them a long way across the big river—they meant the Mississippi. For reasons we can easily understand, he did not dare question his master and the overseers, and hence he returned late at night, sad and oppressed, to his cabin, where he rolled sleeplessly on his bed. He suddenly sprang up, and, after listening whether all were quiet in the negro village, glided like a shadow through the darkness.

At the foot of a densely wood-aded height, which runs down from the

chain of hills surrounding Banataria Bay in a semicircle, into the plain in the direction of the lagoon and the bayou, old Urrica's hut stood in the shadow of palmetto trees. The old woman, on whose snow-white, woolly hair the blue flame of the resinous wood cast a fantastic glare, was seated on a rough block of wood, staring at the crackling fire, while she muttered dark curses, which she had heard eighty years before on the banks of the Congo river. Suddenly the curtain of reeds which served as a door was lifted, and Shoko's massive figure emerged from the darkness. He walked in silently, and cowered down by the side of Urrica, with his elbows resting on his knees.

"My child," said the old crone, "I knew that you would come, for the whip-poor-will has called seven times. Massa has robbed you of wife and child—you wish to know whither they have gone. The Fetish cannot say, for he is no bloodhound, able to follow Dinah's trail across the big river."

"I know that, mother Urrica," Shoko answered, "but he must tell me how I can best punish the white villain."

"Yes, my child, I thought of that too," the old woman continued; "but you must promise me to do exactly what the Fetish says to me. What massa has done to you he has done to me also, for you are of my blood. Old Urrica saw her children pine away here under the lash without shedding a tear; now it is your turn; but massa must look out that his own blood has not to pay for all the misery. Let us go and consult the Fetish."

She rose, and walked out into the palmetto thicket, ahead of Shoko, holding in her hand a resinous branch kindled in the fire. Here she stopped in front of a hollow tree, swung her torch with maniacal speed in a circle round her head, and muttered incomprehensible words.

Whether it was mere chance, or that the old crone really knew the snake's hiding-place, in the mean while a viper had thrust forth its head from a crack in the hollow tree, and held out its tongue to the old woman.

"Quiet, Shoko, don't be frightened about me," Urrica said, in a whisper, to her startled grandson; "the Fetish will do me no hurt. He only wishes to bring news."

"What has the Fetish said, grandmother?" the superstitious negro asked, as he tried to put out the torch on the damp earth.

"He sends you to his cousins in the lagoon. They will assist you. But come to the hut, for I am cold; there I will tell you everything," was the reply.

The next morning old Urrica might be seen crawling to the great house by the aid of her stick. She pretended some business in the yard, where she fed the poultry and helped the negro girls in the kitchen; until, as usual about this time, Fiddy, Blanche's house-waiting-maid, made her appearance to fetch her mistress's breakfast. The old woman got into conversation with her, and made some inquiries as to the health of M.

Lafitte and his daughter. The gossiping mulatto girl replied to her queries, that Miss Blanche had been suffering for some time past, and that a celebrated physician had been fetched from New Orleans, who declared that her young mistress was not actually ill, but suffering from weak nerves. For this reason he had not ordered her any medicine, but recommended Miss Blanche to take a cold bath every morning. Her mistress, consequently, went every morning at daybreak to the pond in the garden, where she bathed, and then reposed for an hour in the shade of the trees. For this reason, all the slaves excepting herself were forbidden, under heavy penalties, visiting this portion of the park.

Old Urrica heard all these remarks with a repulsive grin, and then went slowly homewards. She stopped in the negro village, which was quite deserted, as the slaves were all at work, and looked about her to see whether she was noticed. As she saw that, with the exception of the usual groups of domestic animals, only a couple of small picaninnes were playing in the morning sun, she attracted to her side a little dog, which accidentally barked at her, seized it with a rapidity extraordinary at her great age, stopped its mouth, and cleverly concealed it under her cloak. Then she walked slowly and tranquilly toward her hut in the palmetto thicket.

The clock in the great house had just struck midnight, and with the exception of the melodious cry of the whip-poor-will, and the distant note of the American bittern, which sounded like a muffled peal of drums, not a sound was to be heard. The moon shone pure and bright in the sky, and cast her blue light over the unruffled surface of the lagoon, which lay like a mass of molten lead, and not a breath stirred the fantastic garlands of Spanish moss which covered, like a white veil, the dark branches of the lofty sycamores and bog-oaks. Nature breathed that peace which is peculiar to the enchanted nights of the South, but which man so readily disturbs when wild passions impel him. At the spot where Black Creek joined its dark waters with the lagoon, and the reedy bank became level, Shocko was standing in the shadow of a tree. Under his left arm he held the puppy secure, and his right hand was armed with a heavy crowbar. He sent a long wailing cry-pealing across the water; then, after a short pause, a second and a third; after which he listened, and surveyed the mirror-like surface with his dark eyes.

"Here the braccoon* must lie," he said, in a soliloquy: "the Fetish does not deceive; he knows where his cousin dwells. Yesterday I saw his moss-covered back, as he was trying to slip into the creek."

Shocko was not mistaken; for the water under him began to ripple, air-bubbles rose, and ere long something came to the surface, which resembled a shapeless black tree-trunk; when the dog became restless, and broke into a low whine, the trunk approached the bank, as if borne

* A large savage variety of alligator, which readily attacks human beings.

by invisible hands; and a moment after, the massive jaws of a great alligator were thrust upon the bank. The lagans now became animated; phosphorescent stripes revealed the spots where scaly, serrated tails were lashing the water, and soon a dozen of the monsters were collected at Shoko's feet; but they all kept at a respectful distance from the bracken, with whose superior strength and savageness they were acquainted.

Shoko now altered his position by walking slowly along the bank—upon which, as he knew, the beasts would not venture in the presence of man—to the spot where the creek flowed into the lagans. Here he stopped again, and drew from the unhappy dog, which was trembling like an aspen leaf, the most piercing tones, which had almost a spectral effect in the silent night. The alligators could not withstand this bait, and ere long collected, with the mighty braccoon at their head, at the spot where the negro's dark form displayed its outline on the low promontory. Shoko now walked slowly—stopping every two yards, and showing the poor puppy as a bait—up the stream, on the left bank. The other brutes did not venture farther, as they did not feel exactly comfortable in the narrow bed of the creek; but the braccoon, the largest and greediest of them, and, moreover, conscious of its strength, would not let its prey slip. The monster crawled at one moment, and at another swam after the negro, according as the depth of water allowed, and kept its greedy eyes, which flashed like carbuncles, constantly fixed on the whining puppy, which Shoko's iron fist held out to it.

At length the negro reached the ditch we have already described, and the hungry beast followed, uttering, with expanded jaws, its peculiar hoarse snorting, up to the powerful grating which closed the entrance to the pond. When Shoko drew the grating up the alligator seemed somewhat startled at the unexpected apparition, and moved its massive head to the right and left, as if seeking some other exit. But when the merciless negro hurled the wretched dog with a loud plash into the pond, the savage braccoon darted forward like an arrow far into the quiet pool, and crushed between its iron jaws the barbarously sacrificed animal, which scarce found time to utter a yell of pain. With a devilish smile Shoko at once closed the iron grating; he knew that the braccoon could not leave the pond again, and muttered to himself,—

“The Fetish's cousin will have a fine breakfast to-day. Massa, we're quits.”

The sun was just rising on the eastern horizon, and throwing its fiery beams over the landscape, which glistened with all its summer beauty. In the small garden wood, heavy, glistening dewdrops hung on all the branches, and the graceful blossoms of the orange trees spread a balsamic atmosphere around whenever a breath of wind stirred. At this moment light footsteps, like those of girls, became audible, and approached the pleasant pond, on whose surface, here and there bedecked with the snowy blossoms of the nymphæa, gaily coloured dragon-flies were sporting.

Almost immediately after, Blanche appeared, accompanied by Fiddy, her pretty little waiting-maid, and sat down on a stone bench placed there for her convenience.

"Ah, dear Fiddy," she said, "I have really no inclination for bathing to-day. Do you not think that I look faint?"

"Miss Lafitte has slept badly in consequence of the heat," the young mulatto girl replied; "but in that case the bathing will do good; and refresh her."

"Do you think so?" Blanche remarked. "I must tell you, though, that I cannot close an eye, because I am always thinking of old Urrica: When she was talking to you in the yard yesterday morning I was sitting at the window, and she gave me such a look, a long, searching look, which struck me like the bite of an adder. Tell me, Fiddy, do you believe in the evil eye?"

"Well, the people say a good many strange things about the old woman; she is also said to know the spot where your grandfather Lafitte buried a chest of doubloons when the Governor of Louisiana sent his gunboats against him. But that is all mere foolish gossip. Did not the clergyman lately tell us in church that such superstition is unwise and unchristian?"

During this conversation the faithful and sensible mulatto girl had addressed her young mistress, and the latter was preparing to enter the bath. When Blanche was standing up to her waist in the water a few yards from the bank, a small, hardly perceptible motion began: some disturbance further off in the pool; but she paid no heed to it, and thought that it was probably a terrapin (a small variety of tortoise); but Fiddy's hawk-like eyes had already recognized the frightful danger from her elevation.

"For Heaven's sake, come back, miss!" the mulatto shrieked, and wrung her hands.

At this moment her eyes fell, as if by Heaven's decree, on the stout iron bar, which Shocco, in his devilish delight, had incautiously left on the edge of the pool. As if urged by a sudden impulse, the courageous girl seized the heavy bar, and with one tremendous leap reached the side of her mistress, ere the latter had noticed the menacing destruction. The braccoon had risen from the bottom of the pond, gently, cunningly, and in a cat-like manner, and the black outline of the horrible reptile was already visible on the white sand. The beast was already preparing to leap forward and seize its almost insensible prey, when Fiddy's desperate leap, and the loud noise produced by it, as well as the sudden commotion of the water, made the alligator hesitate. The mulatto took advantage of this hesitation—as she was aware of the real cowardly character of the alligator when it fancies itself surprised—to thrust her mistress back toward the bank; and when the voracious braccoon, on recovering from its surprise, made a second dash, the powerful girl thrust the heavy iron bar down its

red throat, so that the infuriated creature dashed the water into foam with its gigantic tail for pain.

The violent attack almost pulled the mulatto down, but she kept on her feet with the energy of desperation, and holding the fainting Blanche with her left hand, she incessantly tried to reach the bank while thrusting the bar deeper into the throat of the advancing braccoon. She succeeded in throwing the lifeless form of her mistress on land; then seized the heavy bar—on which the beast broke its sharp teeth—in both hands, drove the point with all her strength as deep as she could into the braccoon's bleeding throat, and with the activity of a panther she reached the bank with one bound. It was the work of an instant to raise her unconscious mistress and carry her some distance up the garden. Then Fiddy lost her strength, and uttering a loud shriek for help, she sank with her burden on the ground; while the infuriated braccoon, that at length had got rid of the bar, darted backwards and forwards along the edge of the pond, and glared at its victims, but, true to its alligator nature, did not venture on land.

Ten minutes later Fiddy and the still insensible Blanche were conveyed into the house by the slaves who had hurried up on hearing the cries; and who can depict Lafitte's terror, but also his simultaneous joy, at his daughter's rescue? The ice broke in his heart, and, moved by gratitude, he gave the courageous mulatto girl her liberty, which she only accepted, however, on condition that she might remain with her mistress for life.

The next thing was to kill the braccoon, and to discover in what manner it had got into the pond. After the former had been effected, all the slaves on the plantation were called together and examined. They all appeared, with the exception of the aged Urrica and her grandson. The fact that Shocko had been seen on the previous day with an iron bar, the same which was found at the bottom of the pond, bent and dented by the alligator's powerful jaws, strengthened the arising suspicions. The overseer fetched the bloodhounds from the kennels, and brought them to the pond, after giving them an old shoe belonging to the negro to smell at. On arriving they barked loudly, and hurried along the ditch and stream to the spot where Shocko first enticed the braccoon. Here they stopped, as if they had lost the trail; then turned round and ran back to the first starting-point, round which they trotted in large circles, with their noses close to the ground. All at once the largest of the dogs gave a loud bark, and started off again, followed by the whole pack. This time they proceeded in a northern direction straight to the palmetto copse where Urrica's hut stood, and all the dogs stopped before the latter, yelling and barking.

When the pursuers entered they found the old crone lying dead, with a frightfully swollen body, while an enormous rattlesnake greeted them from the smouldering ashes with a menacing rattle. The poisonous reptile was immediately killed, and the bloodhounds were urged on by

shouts. In vain ; they refused to go further, and could not be induced to run round the hut.

"The nigger is not here," Daly cried ; "but what's this?" he continued, as he picked up a broken glass from the ground. "By Heaven ! there we have it ; the villain has rubbed his soles with turpentine."

The pursuit of Shocko was continued without dogs, but to no effect. A few months later it was heard that Urrica's grandson had been hung for robbery at no great distance from a new plantation in Savannah. Before his execution he confessed the design which he had attempted to carry out against Blanche, in obedience to Urrica's oracular language. Since the terrible event, however, M. Lafitte is said to have become quite a different man, and to treat his slaves humanely.

Where there is much light, there is also much shade. It is the same with the character of the negro. In order to make his readers better understand this assertion, the writer has told a true incident, in which these two extremes are distinctly shown. The revengeful Shocko represents the savage nature of the African race,—the noble-hearted mulatto its better qualities.

ADVENTURES OF A QUEEN'S MESSENGER.

NO. II.—A SWEDISH CAFÉ.

A SWEDISH café, which is by no means the most uninteresting place of resort in Stockholm, may be thus simply described :—A room containing dirty newspapers, a floor uncomfortable to look at and to walk on, from the immoderate habit of spitting indulged in by the majority of the guests ; small tables, placed here and there conveniently by sofas and chairs ; a counter in front of them, on which are plates and glass dishes, containing various descriptions of cakes and sweets—the Swedes being peculiarly fond of anything well saturated with sugar ; tumblers filled with cigars, a tin jug with warm water, a bottle of cold water, a snuff-box, &c. ; and against the wall, behind the counter, a number of shelves on which are ranged suspicious-looking bottles, containing all sorts of liquors, spirits, and wine ; groups of glasses of various sizes and shapes ; sweetmeats and bonbons in glass vases, and so forth.

Between the counter and the wall stand the presiding goddesses, who communicate the orders to the kitchen through a trap-door in the wall. They are almost sure to be a couple of good-looking girls, elegantly dressed, and with manners fit for a duchess. I say it unreservedly, a duchess ; and I mean it. It is a curious fact, and no less curious than true, that these same "Skänk Mamseller," as they are called, have as good manners as any in the land—I had almost said better ; and many who pride themselves on their aristocracy in our own country might take a lesson from them.

They are, in fact, one among the many peculiarities of Sweden. They are always in motion ; serving now this guest, now that ; having a good word and a kind look for each. Being familiarly treated by most of the *habitués* of the café, or *Schweizeri*, as it is usually called, they are nevertheless always in their place, and always ready and obliging. Indeed, the popularity and the fashion of the establishment alike depend on them.

If they are fair to look on, and good-tempered, with a proper amount of vivacity and small talk, their fame is soon made known throughout the town. The guards hear of it, and come in troops ; the lieutenants, whose number is legion, the men in public offices, the strangers, the merchants, the Jews, all flock to the rendezvous, and the lucky landlord makes his fortune.

Should some chance remove these fair damsels, and they be replaced by others less charming, the café is at once deserted, and the capricious Stockholmers transfer their favours to some other establishment, where the attendants are more fascinating—the articles of consumption being precisely the same.

After the theatre, or say between nine and eleven, the café is probably fullest : then every little table is occupied. At one, four or five men are seated, all talking at once. They are officers of the guards, one of them probably in uniform. All of them are smoking vigorously ; and on a tray

upon the table before them are a number of small tumblers, about the size of jelly glasses, filled with the favourite beverage of the day, called "tuting." This means simply two things,—that is to say, brandy and hot water—grog, in fact; generally half of each, the brandy for choice, and sweetened immoderately. Now the conversation waxeth loud, and the brave guardsman becomes eager. Now one of them seizes his "tuting," and the rest are not slow to follow his example; they raise their tumblers simultaneously, clink them together, demolish the contents at a gulp, and with a motion of their arms towards each other, indicative of there being no liquor left inside, down go the tumblers again with a clash upon the tray.

At another table, in solitary magnificence, with the evening paper before him, discussing his beefsteak and poached eggs, and his pint bottle of beer, sits a count of the land—a man of exalted rank. He speaks to few, but answers each person's humble bow with great courtesy; he eats his supper and reads his paper with manifest pleasure, pays his modest bill, and departs. At a third table are two men with their simple supper before them—some slices of cold tongue on a small glass plate, slices of bread and pats of butter on others; no separate plates for themselves—not are such required; for these gentlemen, according to the custom of the country, adopt the less artificial method of helping themselves to butter with their own knives, spreading it on a piece of bread, applying a slice of tongue, and eating the whole as a sandwich, and they wash it all down with Swedish "Bavarian" beer. The cost is trifling—probably not an English shilling. The guests are in general orderly enough; that is, except certain harmless familiarities with two fair damsels at the counter; but there is rarely any great breach of decorum unless a party of men stay late over their cups, and get noisy. To fresh comers the house is shut at eleven, but those who have arrived before can manage to stay, and a jovial lot will often assemble, about the above-named hour, round a bowl of spirituous contents, and drink and sing and shout till the bowl is empty, when they separate with tottering steps and confused mien to their several homes, to sleep off their debauch. To speak frankly, however, these cafés are by no means to be neglected by the stranger desirous to learn something of the modes and manners of a people among whom he finds himself; and it is entirely his own fault if he does not meet therein every courtesy and attention.

A SWEDISH BATH.

Washing, I fear, for the mere sake of matutinal refreshment, is little understood in its practical illustrations beyond the white cliffs of *perfid* Albion. Young England goes from the cradle to the bath or tub each morning, alike for health and refreshment as well as cleanliness; and the habit thus early commenced is for the most part followed up throughout life. This is not the case on the Continent, where water, for the most part, is required more to drink than to wash in; whereas soap is an expensive luxury, not, as in England, a cheap necessity of daily, nay, hourly consumption. Almost all

the cities of Europe have their public baths; but, as I have said, they are used for specific purposes, and not as every-day luxuries. We have the Turkish baths, and the German baths, and sulphur baths, &c.; whereas in Sweden there are several halting-places where the patient undergoes a peculiar, not to say disgusting, operation. He is probably afflicted with rheumatism, a disease prevalent throughout the country. The season is quite over in merry Stockholm; all his friends have left—some for their country seats, others for France, for Carlsbad, Hamburg, and other German spas, where Swedes do most congregate; for, be it observed, Swedes when away from home do mostly congregate and stick together, as if they were afraid of other people, and not quite sure as to whether they are quite as advanced in the art of civilization and in European manners as the rest of the company—a laudable modesty, if it be so; not that I assert that it is, but they act as if such were their thoughts on the subject. I rather fancy it arises out of the same pride and jealousy, with a consciousness of being in a backward state, which causes them somewhat to avoid resident foreigners in Stockholm. But I am leaving my rheumatic friend, who, leaving the capital, journeys down to one of the little modern villages on the desolate western coast, which has been raised to the degree of a watering-place; here he finds a room ready for him, having taken care to write beforehand to the doctor of the place to engage it; and here he establishes himself in the month of June, for a certain number of weeks, to be cured of his aches and pains.

He first secures a fixed hour at one of the bathing-houses, and commences the operation of being mudded on the following day. Having repaired to the bath-house he finds a room, and an old woman who receives him with a benignant smile: she is selected as his attendant, his female valet, in fact. They enter the room, she shuts the door and begins forthwith to help him to undress; the operation is proceeded with until he is reduced to the state in which he was born.

One would imagine that the mud must already have had some peculiar effect, for although completely bereft of his clothes—more naked, in fact, than a wild Indian—no blush of modesty flushes the patient's cheeks; he appears unconscious of his denuded state—he shows no sign of shame—his old woman and he look placidly at one another, and the second act of the comedy commences. In each room is a small bucket full of some dark-looking liquid, more like paint than anything else I can think of; a sort of half-liquid, half-solid, sticky, yet soft material, which is, in fact, a species of mud. It is found near the sea-shore, is collected and refined—particles of shells and so forth being carefully extracted,—and is considered admirably efficacious for curing Swedish rheumatism. What this mud consists of I cannot truly say, but sulphur is certainly one of its ingredients.

The patient then sits down; the old woman approaches him with the mud bucket, and sets to work energetically to plaster him over and rub him with the slimy paint. I must here observe that these old women, who have thorough practice, are said to possess a very delicate touch, and

to rub in the most artistic and soothing way. Yet I scarcely think I could submit to be smeared over with such nastiness. It may be clean mud, and doubtless it is, if such it can be; yet it is still mud, and as such I wash my hands of it;—a troublesome undertaking, I fancy, for I am told it sticks to the person most tenaciously.

After the sufferer has been rubbed and plastered a sufficient time, the aged female directs a douche upon his stomach, which routs the mud with great slaughter, and finally he gets into a warm bath of sea-water, upon emerging from which he is again assisted in his toilet by his aged female attendant aforesaid.

To those who merely require salt-water baths, wooden structures called "bassins" are placed in the sea. These are square in form, with a dressing-room at each end: the space enclosed is hardly large enough to swim about in comfortably.

The ladies have, of course, their separate bassins, and, with that innocence and freedom from affectation which distinguishes them, they altogether disdain the fashionable but silly costume which must necessarily destroy half the freshness of the bath, and plunge into the briny water clothed in their own virtue—mingling together and sporting about like so many nymphs or sea goddesses.

The male sex are of course excluded from all view of these interesting splashings, and fun, and so forth. So far Swedish simplicity does not go. I am, then, unable to give any account of the scene—doubtless very charming.

HOW MARSHAL BERNADOTTE BECAME CROWN PRINCE OF SWEDEN.

Ere I quit the subject of Sweden, I would desire to add some interesting details not generally known as to the fact of how Marshal Bernadotte became Crown Prince of that kingdom. The story is simple, but interesting, the Crown having been obtained through the means of a young lieutenant. In Sweden, however, the lieutenants are important people, more important than the captains, who rarely partake in the amusement of dancing, a most serious item in a Swedish military education; for many who can do nothing else can dance, and are consequently the delight of the fair frökens, the nobly born damsels of society; indeed, I have heard tell of a fröken who loudly declared that one Swedish lieutenant was better than a hundred young diplomates, wherein I dare say she was right as far as she was individually concerned; yet I doubt if all were of the same opinion. Meanwhile I would observe, that any man of a certain age, not being a lieutenant, is, generally speaking, a royal secretary,—a rank or title awarded to all clerks in Government offices; and indeed, I fancy, to any clerk in any office whatever. Now should the individual not belong to either of the above-mentioned categories, he is merely a "brukspatron," which literally means "owner of a forge," and includes all country gentlemen, farmers, and such like, who have not any other title wherewith to bless themselves; and in

right of their name, these forge owners wear a uniform,—consisting of an evening coat with a braided velvet collar, and a dress sword, and thus they present themselves at Court.

But to my tale. The Swedish people, having deposed their King Gustavus IV., who was an obstinate and religious madman, and having declared that neither he nor his descendants should reign in the land, put on the throne his uncle Charles, and 19th of the name, who was an old man and childless; and then they cast about for a successor to their Charles in other lands. First they selected one, Prince of Augustenburg, who was of a sickly habit and soon died—some said by poison, but that was mere malice—and the succession was again open.

The old King was desirous to select the brother of the dead Prince, Duke of Augustenburg, and in the month of June, 1810, he sent couriers to Paris, to sound the great Emperor, whom he wished to please. One of these couriers was my lieutenant, by name and title Baron Otto Mörner.

He was a little grotesque man, of insignificant figure and common address; but his soul was great, for was he not a Swedish lieutenant? Arrived in Paris, with big ideas crowding on his mind, he sought out one La Pie, a young officer whom he had known in former times, and to him related the great enthusiasm which existed in Sweden for Napoleon I., expressing his belief that the whole nation put its hopes in him, and would receive with open mouths and grateful hearts whomsoever that mighty monarch should be pleased to select as their future king. And who better fitted, added he, to fill that throne than one of his illustrious generals? These the young officers straightway passed in review, and talked the matter fully over; and the lot fell upon Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo.

But how to proceed? how to gain the favour of Napoleon for this his most independent general, who, if selected, would not stoop to be a puppet in his hands—his lieutenant in the north? Still, they argued, the Emperor would scarce refuse to any French general so brilliant an offer. Bernadotte, then, it must be; on this they entirely agreed.

Then did Mörner take to himself a second confidant, Signeul, the Swedish consul-general in Paris, a clever intriguer fit for the work. He was readily won with hopes of a future ambassadorship and great dignity and honour. And now Mörner desired an interview with the Prince: this with some trouble being granted, our adventurer (for such he was) found himself in the presence of his Highness.

Now there was a notorious sibil-woman, who at that time had generally a finger in every pie. One Mademoiselle Lenormand had whilom read Bernadotte his fortune—had promised him a crown, in order to obtain which he was to cross the seas. Here was a good chance, indeed; that the prophecy should be fulfilled. Mörner pleaded his cause warmly: he was the representative of a strong party in Sweden; himself member of the Diet, he knew its sympathies, and they were favourable to France and to the

Prince; and the old King could not, if he would, oppose himself to the will of the chambers. Much more was said which fascinated the Prince, who, though shrewdly suspecting he was in the presence of an adventurer, acknowledged to himself that he indeed might be destined to rise still higher, and change his principedom for a kingdom; still he replied in cold and measured terms, professing his thanks, yet adding that Napoleon was his master, and on him all must depend. He would speak with the Emperor, and communicate the issue of his interview.

The Marshal Prince, received by Napoleon, declared his errand, and the offer made; but that he had declined to accept it till he knew his master's wish, leaving his fate in his hands, and confessing freely it was a homage to the empire, and not to his poor self.

The Emperor replied coldly. He knew not what it all meant. The King of Sweden had shown his inclination for another. "Even should the Swedes elect you," continued the Emperor, "you will reap neither honour nor fortune. They are a restless people, visited with anarchy, and I cannot give you one company of soldiers to keep you in your new position. I like not your lieutenant, who weaves his schemes unknown either to his Court or his embassy. It is all folly. But I wash my hands of the matter, and will not meddle one jot in this Swedish succession.

Then Mörner bethought himself of General Count Wrede, another envoy from Sweden—an honourable, straightforward soldier, of a fair and ancient name, and allied with houses of great consideration in France. He had just had his parting audience with the Emperor, and was about to return to his own country. Mörner knew him well, and felt great hopes of rousing him to help the good cause of Sweden. Arrived at the General's, he entered the room with mysterious looks, and strange, excited face, and straightway locking the door, conjured the astonished Swede to swear never to divulge what he was about to disclose—"least of all," he added, "to Baron Lagerbjelke, the Swedish minister."

This promised, the lieutenant poured into the old soldier's ears the whole story of his doings, his audience of Bernadotte, his future plans. He declared that Napoleon was indifferent in the matter, that the Prince would willingly accept the honour if elected, that there was a large party of Swedes in his favour, and he entreated Wrede to assist his views and espouse the cause of Bernadotte. Wrede, to whom the Emperor had just before expressed his indifference on the subject, who likewise loved the Prince sincerely, as one who had shown him much kindness, and in time of war had treated his countrymen with mercy and consideration, was speedily brought over, and promised his best aid in Sweden.

On the 29th of June Mörner left Paris, bearing a letter to the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs from General Wrede, to explain the motives of the latter's conduct. Bernadotte took leave of Mörner most courteously, and charged him to tell his Swedish Majesty, that Napoleon, far from opposing the plan, approved of it, while he himself would accept

so high a destiny with cheerfulness and gratitude: But of all the *dramatis personæ* of this most interesting bye-play, the Swedish ambassador acted the sorriest part, not having even guessed what was in the wind, or suspected aught, till the honest Wrede—Mörner once well away—spoke the news to his Excellency.

I would not have been in that diplomatist's shoes for a sack of golden guineas. Meanwhile the General went his way home also.

Lieutenant Mörner arrived in Stockholm. One can well imagine the incredulous stare of that grave personage—the Count of Engeström, Minister of State and for Foreign Affairs—when the bold youth poured forth his tale; how he had proposed a Crown Prince of Sweden, and with what success. And the Count Essen, then present, shouted out, “Boy, you ought to sit where neither sun nor moon give light.”

For all that, Mörner's cause gained ground, and advocates rose quickly—ay, even with members of the King's own council board, among whom no one could be named more talented or more rising than Baron Wetterstedt, a name well known in after years. Like all men of genius, with eyes and mind ever open to new ideas and impressions, he at once perceived the advantages the selection of a French marshal would bring to Sweden, and with energy he espoused that warrior's cause.

On the same side came Baron Platen, formerly so warm for the Duke of Augustenburg; and Mörner himself, although enjoined to keep his story secret, went about telling all who would listen, that the despatches he had brought did not, as the Government desired it to be believed, announce Napoleon's predilection for the Duke, but for the Prince Ponte Corvo. Then he wrote to his accomplice Signeul at Paris, that their cause tarried, and was much hindered; that they must work upon the Swedish Government from without, and show that the Prince's choice was favoured by Napoleon, whose every opinion had such weight in Sweden, that upon a wink from him they would select no matter whom to be their future King. Thus there were two parties,—and that of the Prince, at first the weakest, increased in number and importance daily.

The scene now changes to a little country town called Orebro, where the Diet should sit, and thither the King journeyed.

It is not my place to depict the state of the weak old King when he was told of the intrigues there carried on. He who had chosen the brother of the dead Prince, his adopted son, to fill the same place, what could he think when he found his royal wishes thwarted, his very courier leading the van? And for what? To place forsooth a French soldier in succession on the immemorial Wasa throne! I can see the struggle in mind and body, which day after day wore out the poor old man.

The influence of his nearer intimates was exercised still for the dead Prince's brother, and this strengthened him in his own inclination and generous resolve. And with these feelings he proposed the Duke of Augustenburg to the secret committee selected to make choice of a

successor to the throne; and he had surely been elected, when the affairs took that turn which I shall now relate.

The change came from without. Signeul, learning how things were going on at Örebro, saw at a glance what was wanting to turn the Diet in favour of the French Prince, and therefore proposed to him to send one Fournier, formerly French vice-consul at Gothenburg, to Örebro, to affirm that his Highness would gladly accept the Crown Prince of Sweden, should he be called thereto by the Swedish nation; that Fournier should show such advantages in favour of the Prince as would shame all rivals; that he should be provided with full powers and a private letter from Signeul to the Count of Engeström. The Prince agreed, but added acutely, that if all Sweden would accept him, the King alone refusing, he would be no Crown Prince of theirs; that Fournier, to prove his mission, should take with him a certain ivory case, containing miniature portraits of the Princess and his son Prince Oscar, to deliver to General Wrede, to whom and the Count of Engeström only he was to speak on the subject.

Fournier left Paris, and travelled to the last stage from Örebro. From there he sent a letter to the Count Engeström, begging permission to give into his hands an important and weighty commission. After due deliberation the permission was accorded, and Fournier saw the Count the same day as the secret committee of the Diet had given their voices for the Duke of Augustenburg.

The Count was truly astonished when he learnt the nature of the mission. He took the portraits and the letter, but scarce knew what to reply. "It is too late," he said, "things have gone too far;" and yet he caused the conference, which should have assembled on the same day to review the secret committee's report, to be delayed. This delay was not lost by the French party; that very night hundreds of unsigned slips of paper were prepared, setting forth the material advantages which would follow the election of Bernadotte; that he was the choice of Napoleon, whom all looked up to, and who would be secured to Sweden, and that Russia would be attacked and beaten; the French warrior would lead his new people against their hated enemies, and reconquer Finland for the Swedish Crown.

Then the Count Engeström, himself already half gained over, prepared for a serious task. It was necessary to relate what had happened to the King. Here he found his task easier than he had dared to hope; his Majesty had also somewhat changed, and when the Count declared what Bernadotte had said,—that were all Sweden for him, but the King against him, he would have none of it,—old Charles exclaimed, "Faith, that must be an honourable man." The way was prepared; and when, soon after, a letter came by post to Count Engeström, not sealed or dated, but in Signeul's handwriting, stating that Napoleon would gladly see Marshal Bernadotte King of Sweden, the cause was won; and Sweden, torn with parties, still bleeding from the loss of Finland, eager for revenge abroad, and threatened with anarchy at home, embraced with joy the hand that

seemed stretched out to help her. A French marshal, bound by ties of kindred and a thousand bloody triumphs to the hero of the age, had risen up to rescue them from all their misfortunes. Bernadotte was in all men's mouths; he was to be their deliverer and avenger. Thus thought the Diet, and on the 21st of August, 1810, it decided to choose as Crown Prince of Sweden, Jean Baptiste Julius Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo.

And there was joy in Orebro. That same evening the merry priests of Sweden assembled together at their club, round huge bowls of native punch, and drank deep; and now the newly elected's health was proposed, and the merry priests stood up (at least, as many as could stand) and raised their glasses to the toast. Then that jovial servant of the Lord, Archbishop of Stockholm, Primate of all Sweden, seized his glass too, and waving it aloft with drunken, blasphemous voice, roared out, "The new Saviour's health!"—a proper Christian! The words were scarce out of his mouth, ere he felt dimly through the fumes of liquor that he had uttered something unseemly; and wishing to mend the matter, the reverend toper added, with a serio-comic upward look, "Not forgetting the old One," and so drained his glass amidst general applause and merriment. Truly a goodly and pious assembly!

And thus Bernadotte became Crown Prince, and, after the old King's death, sat on the Swedish throne.

ROYAL BIRTHS AND BAPTISMS.

THE birth of a prince—whether heir-apparent or heir-presumptive to the crown of these realms—must always be a fact of high interest and import to a free and loyal people; but, in the instance of this last nascent grandson of our well-beloved QUEEN VICTORIA, it may be looked upon as an auspicious, and probably, from the tide of stirring occurrences, may prove a memorable, event.

Whatever good or evil fortune may hereafter betide him, the first child of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, and Alexandra of Denmark, finds a brilliant wreath placed by Fortune on his cradle, and the recent bulletins announcing both royal mother and babe “doing well” were hailed with that unfeigned joyfulness and lively enthusiasm so characteristic of the true-hearted loyalty which distinguishes our race.

In strong and painful contrast to our popular rejoicing consequent upon such glad tidings from Frogmore, and almost mingling with, and jarring the music of our joy-bells, come ill-omened echoes of distant war from that ancient peninsula across the stormy North Sea, where the young Princess first saw the light—the tramp of armed hosts and thunder of hostile cannon in the Danish duchies—imparting a tenfold interest to the relations now existing between Denmark and England. The Danish army having narrowly escaped destruction through the “prevailing faithlessness” of the German powers, and the Prusso-Austrian forces outnumbering the Danes by more than two to one, are free to take possession of all King Christian’s continental dominions, and “all is lost save honour” to the Danes in Schleswig.

Meanwhile, amid the whirl of grave and rapidly passing events just now happening in the native land of his young and royal mother, the friendly and sympathizing English Court and nation are looking forward expectantly to the fast approaching ceremonial of the baptism of the infant heir-presumptive.

Our royal line has on two previous occasions linked itself with that of Denmark, but never, perhaps, under circumstances of such intense and high-wrought interest as those attending the alliance of the present Prince and Princess of Wales.

At this juncture, therefore, it may be neither irrelevant nor unprofitable to cast a rapid retrospective glance over certain salient features and incidents attending the birth and baptism of former heirs-apparent and heirs-presumptive to—

“The regal title, and the seat
Of England’s true-anointed lawful king.”

The olden chroniclers and historians are exceedingly barren in details of the ceremonies observed at the regal christenings of the princes of our island previous to that of Edward the First. The future conqueror of Wales and Scotland—our great Plantagenet and “English Justinian”—

was the first prince who was baptized in Westminster Abbey, after it was rebuilt by his father, Henry the Third; who, in honour of the illustrious founder of that noble pile, bestowed the national and popular name of Edward on his heir—a name endeared to the people by the remembrance of the mild virtues and paternal laws of Edward the Confessor.

The baptism of our *first* Prince of Wales (afterwards the ill-starred Edward the Second) was solemnized after a ruder fashion amidst the rocky fastnesses of the conquered but unsubmitting mountains of Wales, surrounded by the steel-clad followers of his regal sire, and the wild chieftains of the land, who had unwittingly consented to receive for their prince a native of their own country, who should not be able to speak a word of English or French. They reluctantly imprinted the kiss of homage on the tender cheek of the infant Plantagenet, to whom the faithful and high-minded Eleonora, the consort of England's victor-king, had just given birth in one of the towers of Caernarvon Castle.* Anian, Bishop of Bangor, held him at the font, and received a right royal fee for discharging such a function. The elated monarch literally heaped upon him manors and regalities in different parts of Anglesea and Caernarvon, together with the ferries of Bothnan and Cadnant, over the Menai, which contributed no little increase of revenue to the prelate. Such a christening fee—duly recorded in a MS. presented to the British Museum in 1844, by the governors of the Welsh school—had never before been presented to a priest admitting a young prince into the church of Christ; but such example of abundant largess on the part of the triumphant and exultant Edward has never since had an imitator.

In a still more auspicious hour for England was celebrated the baptismal rites of his eldest son, Edward of Windsor, who graces conspicuously the brilliant roll of England's chivalry, as conqueror of France,—the renowned Edward the Third. Ere his infant grasp could draw a sword, he came like a dove of peace to heal the deadly quarrel between the insurgent barons of England and their angry sovereign, and to prove, for a blessed interval, the sweet bond of union between his estranged parents. This babe (our *second* Prince of Wales) was born at Windsor on the 13th day of November, 1312, and four days after was baptized with great splendour in the old chapel of St. Edward. The uncle of Queen Isabella, and the rest of the French nobles who were at the Court of his royal parents, were urgent with the King to allow his heir to be called Louis; but the English nobles of that age, always averse to graft a foreign name upon their royal scions, insisted that the princely boy should be baptized by none other name than that of Edward. The ceremony was performed by the Cardinal Arnold, and the infant prince had no less than seven godfathers, but there is no name of a godmother recorded. It

* Not in the "Eagle Tower," as commonly stated, for it had not then been built.

was a day of high revel and feasting in London city: the conduit in Cheap ran with wine, of which all who chose might drink; and at the jousting cross before St. Michael's Church, in West Cheap, a tent was raised in the middle of the street, beneath which stood a huge butt of wine for every comer who desired to drink thereof to the health of Prince Edward of Windsor.

A fourth heir-apparent of England, of the same popular name, Edward the Black Prince, who afterwards transcended even his mighty father's fame, was born and christened in the sylvan bowers of Woodstock, where Edward III. and his youthful consort, Philippa, then resided in almost domestic retirement. No extraordinary splendour marked the baptismal rites of this illustrious prince; but it is recorded that his infant beauty and strength astonished every one who saw him, and that he was entrusted to no meaner nurse than his royal mother, the Queen of England, who nourished him at her own bosom, and who was, we are told,—

“Joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
Blest cares! all other feelings far above.”

Richard of Bordeaux (heir-presumptive and afterwards Richard the Second), the unworthy son of the Black Prince and Joan, *the fair Maid of Kent*, was born and christened in a foreign land, though within the dominions of his grandfather. Auguries of evil omen touching his future destiny were promulgated in the antechambers of his victorious grandsire, Edward III., and among the ladies of honour of the Princess of Wales, his mother, even at that early period of his existence. Touching his baptism, James, King of Majorca, Charles, King of Navarre, and Richard, Bishop of Agén, being at the Court of the Black Prince in Bordeaux, the first and last of these personages were sponsors for the child, when, on the Friday after his birth, he was carried in state to the cathedral of St. Andrew, and there christened by the Archbishop, who conferred on the unconscious Prince the name of his ecclesiastical godfather, the Bishop of Agén. Exposed, unhappily, to foreign influences, this Provençal Plantagenet acquired Provençal tastes—was gay, indolent, dissolute, and prodigal. Gray, in a single stanza, has painted most forcibly and graphically the pageant of his wasted life, from its “rising morn” to its terrible close:—

“Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding on the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.”

The conqueror of Agincourt's son and successor was but a child of nine months old when he was proclaimed, at London and Paris simultaneously, by the title of Henry the Sixth. He had been christened at Windsor with peculiar splendour, whilst his gallant sire (Falstaff's reformed Prince Hal)—our fifth Harry—was engaged in pushing the siege of

Meaux; the feeble boy's godfathers being his renowned uncle, John, Duke of Bedford, and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester. He was presented at the baptismal font by Jacqueline, Countess of Hainault, who was familiarly designated by Henry V. as *Dame Jake*.

The birth and christening of the only son of "the priest-king," Henry the Sixth, took place at a period when the royal sire was suffering under a severe malady of the brain, attended with total aberration of reason. The infant Prince was born on St. Edward's day, and baptized by that name with great pomp in Westminster Abbey. The ceremony was performed by the pious Waynflete of Winchester, his father's most beloved friend and counsellor. The Duke of Somerset, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Duchess of Buckingham, were the sponsors. The font was arrayed in a score of yards of russet cloth of gold, and surrounded by a blaze of tapers. The chrisom or christening mantle, in which the royal babe was received after his immersion, cost £554 16s. 8d., representing more than five thousand pounds sterling of our present coin; and we learn from the issue rolls, that it was very rich with embroidery of pearls and precious stones. Within this gorgeous mantle was a fine white linen wrapper, to prevent the brocade and gems from coming in contact with the delicate skin of the new-born prince. Though there were no royal "gossips," ten duchesses, eight countesses, one viscountess, and sixteen baronesses received writs of summons to be present at the churching festival of the Queen, his mother. At the ceremony at the abbey, the King—from his state of mental prostration—was not present. Very touching, however, is the account given in a letter among the Paston papers, of the first introduction of the royal infant to the long unconscious monarch, on his restoration to health and reason:—"On the Wednesday, at noon, the Queen came to him, and brought my lord Prince with her; then he asked what the Prince's name was; and the Queen told him Edward: and then he held his hands up, and thanked God thereof, and said he never knew him till that time, nor wist where he had been till now: and he asked the Queen who were the godfathers; and the Queen told him: and he was well content."

The christening of another royal Edward—the fifth of that name,—the rival heir to the throne of England, was solemnized under circumstances of a more romantic character. In the bloody battle of Tewkesbury, fought on the 4th of July, 1471, the last-named Prince of Wales was slain. His successor—doomed to as hapless a fate—was then an infant six months old, when, in turn, "all the clouds that lowered upon the House of York" were blackest. This fair boy first saw the light in the Sanctuary at Westminster, to which the afflicted queen of Edward the Fourth—in her terror and sore distress, with her three little daughters, her mother, and Lady Scrope—fled from the tower by water, on the approach of the victorious Lancastrians. Landing at Westminster, she entered her name as a sanctuary woman, and there awaited the expected hour when she was destined to bring into the world the firstborn son of her fugitive king

and husband. No cloth of gold arrayed the ancient Gothic font of hewn stone, round which the little band of fond and faithful friends gathered, by whom the infant Prince was brought to his christening; for the rite was performed with no greater pomp than if he had been the son of a private person. His godmothers were the old Duchess of Bedford, his grandmother, and the Lady Scrope, his mother's faithful attendant. The kind Abbot, Thomas Milling of Westminster, with the Prior, stood as godfathers to the new-born heir of England; no other men being at hand who would venture to render the desolate child of sanctuary that service. Under such gloomy auspices was born and baptized the most ill-fated of our Princes of Wales;—"poorly in Sanctuary," says Habington, "and, if fortune beyond expectation altered not, heir-apparent only to his father's misery." The beautiful Queen (Elizabeth Woodville), however, was not wholly forsaken nor destitute in her extremity, for her own physician, Serigo, was with her, and a good-hearted gossip, "old mother Cobb," likewise lent efficient service; whilst a loyal butcher, one William Gould, kept the whole party from starvation by a liberal weekly supply of meat. The following extract from the letters patent of Edward the Fourth evidences that sovereign's grateful recognition of the faithful flesher's timely benevolence:—"Letting you wit for the great kindness and true hart that our well-beloved W. Gould, citizen of London, bocher, showed unto us and unto our derrest wife the Queen, in our last absence out of our realm, every week, then giving unto her for the sustentacion of hir household half a beef and ij motons."

The next royal christening of national interest was that of Arthur, Prince of Wales, in whose person the claims of the rival races of York and Lancaster blended in the first year of the union between Henry of Richmond and Elizabeth of York. This welcome and auspicious pledge of peace and joy to the long-bleeding land was baptized at the cathedral of Winchester with extraordinary parade, and appropriately named Arthur, in remembrance of the traditional fame still there surviving of the renowned British king. Elizabeth Woodville, Queen dowager and grandmother, assisted by two of her daughters, the Princesses Cicely and Anne, stood godmother to her infant descendant, and must have recalled with an agonizing thrill of remembrance the scene to which we have just referred, when her own fair boy, Edward the Fifth, was borne, with mingled tears of grief and joy, to the unadorned font within the lonely abbey, where he was preserved from the perils that overshadowed his cradle, to fulfil a darker destiny, at a period when all a mother's fondest hopes were twined around her "gallant, springing young Plantagenet." Henry the Seventh caused the font of Canterbury Cathedral to be removed, at a considerable expense, for the baptism of his other children.

Hall, the chronicler, has been remarkably minute upon the rejoicings which took place on New Year's day, 1511, when *Katherine* of Arragon produced a prince to Henry the Eighth. Having described the pageant which was devised upon the feast of the Epiphany following, Hall says,—

"Shortly after, or before the Queen's churching, the King rode to Walaingham. The Queen being churched and purified, the King and she removed from Richmond to Westminster, where was preparation for a solemn joust in honour of the Queen,—the King being one, and with him three aids: his Grace being called *Cour-cour* *Loial*; the Lord William, Earl of Devonshire, called *Bon Valoires*; Sir Thomas Knevet, named *Bon Espoir*; Sir Edward Nevil, called *Valiant Desire*,—whose names were set upon a goodly table."

Towards the close of this high festival a strange and ludicrous occurrence took place. When the lords and ladies were about to disperse after dancing, the mob outside rushed in upon them, spoiled them ruthlessly of the letters of pure gold which formed part of the decorating devices upon their garments, and even the King allowed himself good-humouredly to be stripped to his hose and doublet. But the rabble at last proceeded to such extremities, that it was found necessary to call in the guard to disperse them. In the scramble a shipman caught certain letters, which he sold to a goldsmith for £3 14s. 8d., by reason whereof it appeared that the garments were of great value.* "After this great joy came sorrowful chance," for the young Prince, born upon New Year's day last past, being then the eve of St. Matthew, departed this world at Richmond (22nd of February), and from thence was carried to Westminster and buried.

Henry the Eighth was then twenty-nine years of age. "Affable and benign, he offends no one," says a contemporary letter-writer, and it was the business of the divorce that seems to have first roused the more angry passions of his nature. Erasmus has comprised the state of England under Henry's dominion six years later in a single pregnant sentence,—"*In Anglia omnes aut Mors sustulit, aut Metus contraxit.*"

But of every ceremonial of the kind on record, the most striking scene, perhaps, was acted at the midnight christening of Edward the Sixth, in the chapel of Hampton Court, when the future defender of the reformed religion was presented at the baptismal font by his sister and Roman Catholic successor, the Princess Mary, whom his birth had just deprived of the immediate heritage of a throne. There, too, unconscious of the awful storm that had clouded her morn of life and reversed her own high prospects since the day when she had been proclaimed Princess of Wales and heiress of the realm, came the young motherless Elizabeth, who had been roused from the sweet slumbers of infant innocence, and arrayed in robes of state, to perform the part that had been assigned to her in the pageant. In this procession, Elizabeth, borne in the arms of the aspiring Seymour, the brother of the Queen, with playful smiles, carried the chrisom for the son of her for whose sake her mother's blood had been shed on the scaffold, and herself branded with the reproach of illegitimacy;

* Ellis's "Original Letters."

and there the Earl of Wiltshire, the father of the murdered Anne Boleyn, made himself an object of contempt to every eye by assisting at this rite, at which he bore the taper of virgin wax, with a towel about his neck. The godfathers associated with the Princess Mary on this occasion were Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Duke of Norfolk, the first of whom, it is well known, she afterwards consigned to the stake.

The font of solid silver was guarded by Sir John Russell, Sir Nicholas Carew, Sir Francis Brian, and Sir Anthony Brown, in aprons, with towels about their necks. The Marchioness of Exeter carried the child under a canopy, which was borne by the Duke of Suffolk, the Marquis of Exeter, the Earl of Arundel, and Lord William Howard. The Prince's nurse, Mistress Jackson, whom he ever called Mother Jake, followed with the Queen's domestics. While his attendants were making the Prince ready in his *traverse*, "Te Deum" was sung: The ceremonial was arranged for the Lord William Howard to give the towel first to the Lady Mary; Lord Fitzwalter to bear the covered basins; Lord Delawarr to uncover them; the Lord Stourton to give the towels to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Duke of Norfolk. After the Prince was christened, his style was thus proclaimed by Garter:—

"God, in His almighty and infinite grace, grant good life and long to the right high, right excellent, and noble Prince Edward, Duke of Cornwall and Earl of Chester, most dear and entirely beloved son of our most dread and gracious Lord King Henry the Eighth."

The Lady Mary gave her godson a cup of gold by Lord Essex; Cranmer, three great bowls and two great pots, which were borne by the Earl of Wiltshire. The Duke of Norfolk presented a similar offering to his royal godson. In the returning procession the Lady Elizabeth was led away by the Lady Mary, her sister, by whom she was at that time so fondly loved, that, when speaking of her, Mary was accustomed to call her a "toward little darling." Elizabeth's train was borne by the Lady Herbert, sister to Catherine Parr. The Prince was carried back in solemn state, with the trumpets sounding before him, to the Queen his mother's chamber, there to receive the blessings of his royal parents. King Henry gave great largess that day. The excitement, noise, and loss of rest caused by this pompous ceremonial in all probability cost Jane Seymour her life.

The Prince Royal of Scotland, afterwards James the First, whose high destiny it was to unite the crowns of England and Scotland, was born in Edinburgh Castle, on the 19th of June, 1566. The apartment in which he first saw the light was, till within the last few years, a guard-room for soldiers. In those who are influenced by local associations, that apartment will probably ever excite no slight degree of interest—less, perhaps, as the birthplace of James, than as being identified with the sorrows of Mary Stuart. Shortly before the birth of her heir-apparent, the clouds of misfortune had gathered fast around that beautiful but imprudent woman;

and thirteen months afterwards the Scottish nobles made use of that royal infant to dispossess her of the throne. Religious discord was rife throughout the land. The Queen and the Puritan clergy—who were constantly intruding themselves on her presence—were each anxious to baptize the heir to the throne according to the ceremonials of their respective faiths. The superintendent of Lothian, a man of milder nature than his fellows, was their delegate on the occasion. Mary received him with her usual sweetness, but returned no answer as regarded the chief object of his mission. She sent, however, for the royal infant, in order to introduce the superintendent to his future king. The minister fell on his knees, and breathed a short prayer for his welfare. He then took the babe in his arms, and playfully told him to say “Amen” for himself, which the Queen, says Archbishop Spotswood, “took in such good part as continually afterwards to call the superintendent her *Amen*.” This story in after life was repeated to James, who from that period always addressed the superintendent by the same familiar name.

As soon as the child was born, Sir J. Melvill had been despatched to inform the English Queen of the event, which so closely concerned both kingdoms, and to request her to act as godmother to the Prince of Scotland. Elizabeth was in high spirits, giving a ball to her Court at Greenwich, when Cecil, the Secretary of State, and Mary Stuart’s envoy, arrived. Cecil went up to her while she was dancing, and whispered the news into her ear. Notwithstanding her habitual self-command, and the fact that the unwelcome event must have been long foreseen, the jealous feelings of the woman prevailed, and she was overcome with sudden melancholy by the intelligence. Interrupting the dance, she sank dejectedly into an arm-chair, leaned her head upon her hand, and remained for some time speechless.

“The Queen of Scots,” she said to one of the ladies who inquired the cause of her melancholy, “is the mother of a fair son, while I am but a barren stock.”

Next day, however, on giving Melvill audience, she dissimulated her grief, and—dressed more carefully and magnificently than usual—received him with a gay demeanour, thanked him for bringing her such good news, and “gladly condescended to be a gossip to the Queen.”

The true cause of Elizabeth’s bitter feeling was that the birth of a Prince of Scotland revived the question of the English succession.

The innocent cause of this jealousy was baptized at Stirling, on the 17th December, 1566, by the Bishop of St. Andrews, according to the rites of the Romish church. Such of the Scottish nobles as professed the reformed religion absented themselves from the ceremony. His godfathers were the King of France and Philibert, Duke of Savoy. Elizabeth, as godmother, sent by her representative, the Earl of Bedford, the present of a golden font, valued at three thousand crowns. After the conclusion of the ceremony, the young Prince was publicly proclaimed by the hereditary titles of Prince and Steward of Scotland, Duke of Rothsay, Earl of Carrick,

Lord of the Isles, and Baron of Renfrew. According to Sir Theodore Mayerne, who subsequently became the physician of James, the wet-nurse of the young Prince was a drunkard, and it was owing to her milk becoming thus vitiated that, though early weaned, he was unable to walk alone before his sixth year.*

That "most incomparable and heroic prince, Henry, Prince of Wales," as Cornwallis, his faithful follower and treasurer, designates him†—the eldest son of James the First and Anne of Denmark,—was born at Stirling Castle, in Scotland, on the 19th of February, 1594. Lord Zouch was deputed by Queen Elizabeth to congratulate the happy parents on the birth of an heir. A brief account of a royal christening in the sixteenth century, especially as an archbishop‡ has condescended to detail it, may be of some historical domestic value. On the day appointed for the ceremony, the infant was brought from its own apartment to the Queen's presence chamber, in which a state bed was prepared for its reception. As soon as the foreign ambassadors were arrived, the Countess of Mar, with the assistance of other ladies, took the Prince from his bed and delivered him to the Duke of Lennox, by whom he was formally presented to the ambassadors. The procession then moved to the chapel in the following order—and it is not a little amusing to observe the way in which the rude and warlike Scottish nobles were employed on the occasion:—first went Lord Hume, carrying the ducal crown of Rothesay; then Lord Livingstone, bearing the towel or napkin; then Lord Seaton carrying the basin, and Lord Semple the laver; next followed the English ambassador, who, as having the place of honour awarded to him, bore the royal baby in his arms. The Prince's train was supported by Lords Sinclair and Urquhart, and above him was a canopy, sustained by four Scottish gentlemen of distinction. On the arrival of the procession at the door of the chapel, the King rose from his seat and received the ambassadors at the entrance of the choir. The infant was presented to the Duke of Lennox, who delivered him over to the nurse. The ambassadors having been ceremoniously conducted to the seats which had been prepared for them, "every chair having a tassel-board covered with fine velvet," the service was performed by Cunningham, Bishop of Aberdeen. As soon as the ceremony was concluded, the procession returned in the same order to the royal apartments, and the Prince was again laid upon his bed of state. The Lyon herald then proclaimed his titles, as follow:—Henry Frederick, Knight and Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, Earl of Carrick, Duke of Rothesay, Prince and Steward of Scotland. Gold and silver were thrown out of the window among the populace, and at night there was a splendid banquet, at which many knights were created; plays and tilting were not wanting, and the rejoicings lasted for some days.

* Ellis's "Original Letters," vol. iii., p. 198.

† "Life and Death of Henry, Prince of Wales."

‡ Spotswood.

Charles the First was born at Dunfermline, in Scotland, the 19th of November, 1600. So weak was he at his birth, that it was hardly expected he could survive his infancy, and consequently, on the 23rd of December following, he was hastily christened according to the rites of the Episcopalian Church of Scotland, but without any of the ceremonies which usually attend the baptism of royal infants. Previous to the young Prince having been brought from Scotland, many of the Court ladies had been anxious suitors for the guardianship of the child. No sooner, however, were they made acquainted with his sickly condition, and the apparent probability of his dying in their charge, than all this anxiety vanished. The chief infirmity of Charles was a weakness in his legs, by which, in his infancy, he was so much distressed that, till his seventh year, he was compelled to crawl on his hands and knees. Sir Robert Cary informs us that the Prince was so weak in his ankles, that he could not even stand alone, and that it was much feared there was a dislocation of the joints. The King was anxious to make the experiment of iron boots, but Lady Cary, to whose charge Charles was entrusted, so strenuously protested against their being adopted, that his Majesty eventually submitted to her superior judgment. Charles had also remained so long a period before he acquired the faculty of speech, that it was more than apprehended he had been born dumb. James proposed that the string under his tongue should be cut, but this remedy was also successfully opposed by the judicious Lady Cary. Probably it was these infantine infirmities that rendered Charles the especial favourite of his mother, Anne of Denmark.* She used to say, observes Weldon, that she loved him as dearly as her own soul. Fuller, speaking of the christening of this Queen's youngest daughter, Mary, tells us that no one ever remembered the ceremony of baptism to have been celebrated with so much pomp as on the occasion of this infant Princess being received into the church. James used to say, with more humour than reverence, that he did not pray to the Virgin Mary, but for the virgin Mary.

By his Queen, Henrietta Maria, King Charles the First had a son named Charles, his firstborn, who survived the rite of baptism but a few hours. The infant was born at Greenwich, in 1628, its birth having been accelerated by a fright suffered by the Queen. It is remarkable that the Roman Catholic priests of the Queen's household were in anxious expectation of its birth, trusting, by an immediate and secret baptism, to smuggle it into their church. Charles, however, was on the watch, and directed his chaplain, Dr. Webb, who was in attendance, to baptize it according to the forms of the Church of England. The infant was buried at Westminster. It was the practice of Charles, whenever his Queen gave birth to a child at Whitehall, to despatch one of the members of his household with a sum of

* The Queen's principal residence was at Somerset House, at that period called *Denmark House*, in honour of the country which gave her birth.

money to St. Martin's Church, in order to insure the birth being formally recorded in the parish books. The fact, however, has been pointed out as a curious one, that only in one instance can such royal entry be traced on the registers. The King, it is said, was deceived by those whom he employed, who preferred appropriating the money to their own advantage.

About the hour of Prince Charles's birth (Charles II.), at one o'clock in the afternoon of the 29th May, 1630, a singular light was seen in the heavens, which the superstitious at once regarded as a presage of his future greatness. The light was merely that of the planet Venus; but Fuller says it "was not only visible the whole day, but also during the two which followed; besides which there was an eclipse of the sun, about eleven digits, observed by the greatest mathematicians." * "Certainly," quaintly remarks Jesse, "the fact that Venus happened to be the particular luminary which presented itself was a singular coincidence, and was at least typical of the subsequent libertinism of Charles's career." Dryden also thus alludes to the circumstance :—

"That bright companion of the sun,
Whose glorious aspect seal'd our new-born King."

And again, in his poem on the Restoration :—

"That star, that at your birth shone out so bright,
It stain'd the duller sun's meridian light."

The Earl of Dorchester thus communicates the news of the Prince's birth to De Vic, the English resident at Paris :—"Yesterday, at noon, the Queen was made the happy mother of a Prince of Wales. Herself, God be thanked, is in good estate; and what a child can promise, that reckons yet but two days, is already visible as a gracious pledge from Heaven of those blessings which are conveyed and assured to kingdoms in the issue of their prince. As this hath set on work here whatsoever may serve to speak the fulness of our hearts in the language of public rejoicing, so his Majesty hath thought fit to communicate his contentment to the King and Queens of France, by his own letters, whereof Mr. Montague is the bearer; and hath commission to invite that King and the Queen-mother † to join with the King of Bohemia in christening of the young Prince. And so in haste I rest, yours to be commanded,—DORCHESTER." ‡

In another letter, from Mr. Samuel Meddus to Mr. Joseph Mede, § some few particulars of the ceremony are preserved :—

"Worthy Sir,—Prince Charles was baptized last Lord's day, about four in the afternoon, at St. James's, in the King's little chapel there, not the Queen's, by my Lord of London, Dean of the Chapel, assisted by the Bishop of Norwich, almoner. The gossips were the French King, the Palsgrave, and the Queen-mother of France; the deputies, the Duke of

* "Annus Mirabilis."

† Ellis's "Original Letters,"

‡ Marie de' Medici.

§ Desid. Curiosa.

Lennox, the Marquis of Hamilton, and the Duchess of Richmond, which last was exceedingly beautiful. The ordnance and chambers at the Tower were discharged, the bells did ring, and at night were in the streets plenty of flaming bonfires. The Duchess was sent for by two lords, divers knights and gentlemen, six footmen, and a coach and six horses plumed,—all the Queen's,—and alighted, not without the gate, but within the court. Her retinue were six women, and gentlewomen I know not how many. But all of both sexes were clad in white satin, garnished with grinson, and crimson silk stockings. I hear not of any presents from the gossips; but the Duchess, for her own particular, presented to the Queen, for the Prince, a jewel, estimated at £7,000 or £8,000; to the Welsh nurse, a chain of relics, estimated at £200; to the midwife and dry-nurse, store of massy plate; to the six rockers, each a fair cup, a salt, and a dozen of spoons. All the lords also gave plate to the nurse. Besides, the Duchess gave to every knight and gentleman of the Queen's, who came for her and brought her back to her house in the Strand (Somerset House), fifty pieces; to the coachman, twenty; and to every one of the six footmen, ten pieces. There were neither lords nor knights made that I hear of, as was said there would be. Yours assured,—*Sam. Meddus.*”

Shortly after this ceremony Charles was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.

The second surviving son of Charles I. and Henrietta Maria, James, was born the 15th of October, 1633, at St. James's Palace, and was immediately proclaimed Duke of York at the palace gates. The title, however, was not formally conferred on him by patent till the 27th of January, 1643. Nine days after his birth he was christened by the Archbishop of Canterbury; but there is no record to be found of his sponsors.

Four sons of James II. (when Duke of York), by his first wife, Anne Hyde—three of which sons had borne the title of Duke of Cambridge, and one Duke of Kendal,—died early. One by his second wife, Mary of Modena—Charles, Duke of Cambridge,—was born and died in 1677. Eleven years later, in 1688, when his parents were on the throne, was born the Prince James Frederick Edward. This only surviving son—afterwards known as the Elder Pretender—was born at St. James's Palace on the 10th of June, 1688. The event, in proportion as it was hailed by James and by the Roman Catholic portion of his subjects as a peculiar boon from Heaven, excited the terror and suspicion of the majority of the English nation. Whilst the rejoicings for the birth of the infant were being celebrated by the Jesuits and courtiers who surrounded the throne, revilings were heaped by the excited populace against the Court, intermingled with prayers and benedictions offered up for the *Seven Bishops*, as that populace followed and encouraged them in their triumphant passage to the Tower.

So great was the King's joy at the birth of his heir, that, despite the

gloomy aspect of affairs and the general disaffection of the people, he, with his Court, thought proper to celebrate the birth and baptism of the young Prince with unusual splendour and rejoicings. He knighted Sir W. Waldegrave, the accoucheur, by the Queen's bedside; distributed magnificent presents among his ministers; and gave large sums of money to different charities. James most imprudently obtained the Pope's consent to become one of the sponsors of the child, and the ceremony of baptism was performed according to the rites of the Romish church. A courtier—De Paz,*—writing to an official in Dublin, says:—"Our Italian letters tell us of the extraordinary joy at Rome upon the birth of the Prince of Wales, and that it was expected his Holiness would suddenly nominate M. Barbarino, or some other prelate, to carry his Royal Highness *the blessed clouds*." In another letter of a Papist courtier we read,—"In return of all your favours, I can send you now the joyful news of a Prince of Wales. God continue it to us. It is a brave, lusty boy, and he to live. Nothing but this happy incident could have jostled that of the bishops so soon out of our thoughts."

The Prince was christened in the Roman Catholic chapel of St. James's. The Pope was represented by his nuncio, Count d'Adda, the Queen Dowager Catherine of Braganza being godmother. There was no circumstance more likely to exasperate the nation than seeing the proxy of the sovereign Pontiff attending, with all the ceremonials of the church of Rome, the baptism of their future King.

The courtiers, it seems, soon put the favour and influence of the "blessed babe" to account; for we read that, when scarce a month old, "the Lady Marquis of Powis, *gouvernante* to the Prince, hath taught his R.H. a way to ask already; for, a few days ago, H.R.H. was brought to the King with a petition in his hand, desiring that 200 hackney coaches may be added to the 400 now licensed, but that the revenue for the said 200 might be applied towards the feeding and breeding of foundling children." A fortnight later the same person writes, "At Richmond the Prince of Wales continues to suck the nurse allowed him, and it hath that good effect which is natural and usual to children; and their Majesties returned thence this day to Windsor. The nurse is the wife of a tye-maker, and seems a healthy woman. She came in *her cloth petticoat and waistcoat and old shoes, and no stockings*; but she is now rigged by degrees, that the surprise may not alter her in her duty and care. £100 per annum is already settled upon her, and two or three hundred guineas already given, which she saith that she knows not what to do with." A week afterwards the same writer says,—"His Highness's nurse is also in health and good plight, being kept to her old diet and exercise. She hath also a governess allowed her (an ancient gentlewoman), who is with her night and day, at home and abroad."

Of the christenings of the future sovereigns, Queen Mary and Queen Anne, we have no particulars, and it is probable that the ceremonies were quietly and privately performed; for even that industrious Court gossip, Pepys, makes no mention of the occasions, nor are they alluded to by Lord Clarendon. The unpopularity of their father at the period of their birth is sufficient to account for the obscurity in which the matter is left.

Of the baptism of the first and second monarchs of the Brunswick line, George the First and Second, we know nothing, as the ceremony was in both instances performed in Hanover; and from the same cause we have not been able to discover an account of the christening of Frederick, Prince of Wales.

George the Third, in consequence of his weakly condition, was privately baptized on the day of his birth; and the ceremony was publicly performed at St. James's Palace on the 22nd of June, 1738. The King and Queen of Prussia, with the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, were sponsors, by special representatives.

George the Fourth, born August 12th, 1762, was on the 17th of the same month created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester; and on the following day the ceremony of christening his Royal Highness was performed in the great council chamber of the palace by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

William the Fourth, our "Sailor King," was born on the 21st of August, 1765; and on the 20th of the following month was baptized in the presence of their Majesties, the whole royal family, and an illustrious assembly of the nobility and foreign ministers; having for sponsors the Duke of Gloucester, Prince Henry Frederick, and the Princess of Brunswick.

Her present Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria was born at Kensington Palace, on the 24th May, 1819, at a quarter past four o'clock in the morning, her uncle, the Duke of Sussex, being the only one amongst her royal relatives present on the occasion. The Prince Regent, attended by Sir B. Bloomfield, was received by the Duke of Kent, who conducted him into the grand saloon; and immediately after the arrival of the Regent, the ceremony of baptism was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishop of London. The sponsors were his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, his Imperial Majesty the Emperor Alexander of all the Russias, who was represented, as his Imperial Majesty's proxy, by the Duke of York, the Queen Dowager of Wurtemberg, represented by the Duchess of Gloucester.

Albert Edward, eldest son of her present gracious Majesty, was christened in St George's Chapel, on the 25th of January, 1842. His sponsors were five:—His Majesty the King of Prussia; her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, proxy for her Royal Highness the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg; his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge; her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge, proxy for her Royal Highness the

Duchess of Saxe-Gotha; her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta of Cambridge, proxy for her Royal Highness the Princess Sophia; and his Serene Highness Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg.

The baptism of an heir-apparent or heir-presumptive always comprises an important ceremony in this country, and on the approaching occasion will naturally excite intense interest, not only from the magnificence and regal splendour which now characterize all the arrangements for such solemn rites, but doubtless will be doubly imposing through the gravity of events passing in the royal mother's native land.

That the heir-presumptive of these realms may attain every earthly joy and felicity is our humble but fervent aspiration. May he, with all king-becoming graces, live to sway the sceptre of this great empire with the same dignity, glory, and prosperity as have so signally marked the radiant and virtuous lives of our deservedly well-beloved QUEEN and her lamented consort, ALBERT the GOOD. And so, following their illustrious example, may he, in the fulness of time, long wear upon his manly brow, as an enthroned king, "the round and top of sovereignty," and be enshrined in the hearts of a grateful people.

S. M.

BERTIE BRAY:

A STORY THAT MIGHT BE TRUE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY LORNE," "THE CROSS OF HONOUR," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

"HE COMES, SCARCE KNOWING WHAT HE SEEKS."

THE wheels of life—of the events and dull details which made up life at Fincham—had not been prodigally oiled of late. The six young gentlemen were still ever renewed—apparently ever renewable,—but at a reduced rate. Education of the same sort could be got on cheaper terms at some of the public schools, parents observed; so Mr. Bray had to come down in his fur from originally high prices, and toil on, more scantily repaid than ever.

Some people take poverty easily, gracefully, and apparently happily; they seem to have a natural aptitude for that course of wholesale deception of tradespeople which does not quite come under the denomination of swindling, and that sort of perpetual sponging upon their friends and relations which does not—equally strangely—quite come under the denomination of "abject beggary." The Brays were not of this order; the husband took it with a sorrowful sadness, and the wife with a grinding hardness that wrung poor Bertie's heart.

"It's all for no end," she would think sometimes, as she stood trying to relieve her father by striving to initiate a boy into the mysteries of something, the attaining unto a knowledge of which made him loathe his existence—"it's all for no end. Papa will never be able to take the rest he wants; and my help is so poor, it leads to nothing."

And then a pang of self-reproach would assail her, for that even the momentary impatience should be hers, the young and strong; when he, the poor failing man, old before his time, went on and on, "unbasting, unresting," on his aught but "God-given hest." But she was only seventeen; and the remarkable fitness of things which consigned her to this mill-horse routine failed to strike her.

"Will you come out with me, papa?" she asked, softly, when the door had closed on the last jacket, and they were left alone in the dusty stillness of the schoolroom at noon.

"Not now, Bertie darling," he said, wearily; and then he looked up and tried to smile, and failed, finding his daughter's eyes fixed tearfully upon him.

"Yes, I will come out," he added, hastily.

"No, you shall not!" she exclaimed, impetuously;—"at least, not for

the walk I meant at first. You look so tired, dear," she went on, fondly, "and I am so tired for you."

He heaved a soft sigh; a dim idea seized him, that if he had only been possessed of a little of that nervous vitality of his daughter's, which was now making her throb and quiver in acute sympathy for him, perhaps there would have been no occasion for her to feel tired for him.

"I am, dear," he answered, presently, "very tired indeed; but it can't be helped, Bertie: I never was a man to get on—it will be so to the end."

She beat her foot on the floor in mute, passionate protest against this utter succumbing to circumstances, which had been the bane of his life. Her father was very dear to her, otherwise her sympathies were not naturally with those who lie down and die without striking a blow on the battle-field of life.

"Papa," she asked at last, abruptly, "do you believe that parable about the talent which was laid up carefully in a napkin?"

He opened his eyes a little wider, but still he ~~was~~ rather fatigued just now, and he was afraid Bertie was about to take him a brisk canter through the field of theology; before he could answer her, however, she went on,—

"It seems to me the best and most rational of all of them—all the parables, I mean. That servant was a lazy idiot, and deserved all he got. What's my 'talent,' I wonder? Oh! if I only knew, wouldn't I work it!"

"Bertie," he said, gently, "you are thinking mine has lain dormant. Child, child, you are right; I was a visionary dreamer, and—"

"All that is best, and cleverest, and most miserably repaid, my dear," she broke in, with the sweet, soothing, caressing tones and gestures, which a child, who is a woman, can use to the father whose calibre is weaker than her own. "I was not thinking of *your* talent when I spoke—though how I could ever forget it for a moment I don't know,—but of my own possible one. What am I fit for? Ah!"—drawing her breath in with a quick, nervous energy, that almost startled him—"if I had only been a man, I would have done something."

"A futile wish, dear; and a foolish one also."

"No, no, papa; futile if you will, but not foolish. If I'd been a man with the same go in me that I have now, I *must* have done something, for the simple reason that it would have been physically impossible for me to remain stationary in any way. As it is, a career of stocking-mending and small housekeeping is all that seems open to me, and sometimes it's appalling; but I'm very wrong to complain, and I never do till you look broken down."

"Bertie," he said, solemnly, "thank God that you are not a man, with a dreamy, drivelled-away Past haunting you. Oh, child! child! if your mother had had your mind and heart, who knows what might have been?"

And then poor Bertie, feeling guiltily that she had wakened a sorrow

that had slept before, crept away out on to the terrace under the medlar tree, to think a little before she was called in to dinner.

It was not at all romantic, but as she sat there—she, my heroine—she began to think of her boots. They protruded, by reason of her careless position on the slope, from under the hem of her dress, and they were ungainly in outline, and spoilt the symmetry of the feet they encased; and she felt that they did, and regretted it quite as keenly as a girl who wasn't capable of holding soul-intercourse with a gifted father could have done.

"They are 'good and serviceable,' as mamma says, I allow; but for all that, they're hideously ugly," she said aloud. And then she took off her hat, and tried to give the brim the curve of old once more, and to readjust the ribbon that had grown weary of staying in its proper place; and as she did so a dark shadow crossed the noontide sunbeam, and a voice said,—

"Quite a study for a 'rustic toilet'! Dear little Bertie, are you glad to see me?"

His arms were round her with the old schoolboy warmth of caress, and his lips were pressing hers with the old, boyish, unconcealed affection; and Bertie felt that to blush as she was blushing was an absurd thing, and that Maurice had not been near them for two years, though now he pretended to be so delighted to see her. The womanish desire to punish him for his shortcomings arose even in the midst of her womanly joy at seeing, hearing, touching him again.

"Have you quite forgotten me, Bertie, or only nearly? Where is your father, and how is he? and how's your mother? and will you give me a shake-down in the old quarters for a short time? My dear little pet! how pretty you've grown!"

He kissed her again as he said this,—“kissed her quite as if she were still a child,” Bertie thought, with sorrowful indignation; not at all as if she were the woman she suddenly felt herself to be.

"We never forget any of the boys who have been here to school, Maurice," she said; "why should we forget you?—though you *have* tried to make us: and I'm sure we shall all be very glad if you can stay a little time with us;—though I'm afraid," she continued, with a sudden pang of recollection of the circumstances by which they were encompassed, "that you'll find it very dull."

"I should say piqued, by Jove! if it wasn't little Bertie," he said, catching her hand and bending down to look into her face; and as he did so he was much too handsome, with his flickering, deepening, never-one-thing-long eyes, and ruddy, fair, curly hair, for seventeen to gaze upon with impunity, that Bertie (prudent Bertie) really "wished he wouldn't."

"Well, I won't—though I don't know what—if you like," he said; "but don't be too severe, my darling pet, or I shall think you're not half as glad to see me as Bertie Bray always promised she would be."

"Bertie Bray has had to wait such a long time for the pleasure; and

yet now, never mind, for you're *come*, Maurice, and that makes up for a good deal: but, you know, I can't stand any one seeming to slight and neglect papa."

"I don't think he'll be so unkind as to think much of my never having come down before, Bertie; I don't, really." And then they walked in, and threw Mrs. Bray into a fever of consternation at this sudden accession to her dinner-table. "Not," as she elaborately explained, "that there wasn't enough, such as it was, but that *what* there was, was not *at all* what she could have wished to set before Mr. Power:" for Mrs. Bray appeared to be ultra-ceremonious on this occasion.

Maurice soon aired all his grievances: he told them about his college life, and the causes of its abrupt termination; and of his sister's projected union with that "old beast, Sir Michael Blayne." "The girl was mad," he opined: "here, she was only a year older than Bertie; much too young, *he* thought, to think of marrying at all. And she chose to go and marry a man old enough to be her grandfather. He didn't approve of it, and he had shown his disapproval by withdrawing from home." And then Bertie couldn't listen to him comfortably any longer, for she felt that there was no real, good, valid reason why the dinner, which would have been put upon the table before now if he hadn't come, should linger so unreasonably and awkwardly on the way.

Mrs. Bray had, in the space of a short quarter of an hour, during which her husband's old pupil and child's old playfellow had occupied a chair in her drawing-room, made three several and abrupt dashes out into the culinary regions. "What *can* be the cause of the delay?" thought poor Bertie. "I'd have given him stale bread and rank butter rather than he shouldn't feel himself at home and welcome to it; and now here's evidently some hitch, and it must have the appearance to him of regarding him as a stranger, and being thrown off our domestic balance by his arrival." That is to say, she thought these things, not in continuity as I have written them down—no one does,—but in jerks.

"I thought you dined at half-past one," said Maurice at last, looking at his watch; "I'm sorry if you've altered the hour, for I'm hungry."

"Oh yes, so we do, and it will be ready directly; and I'm sure I don't know why it isn't ready now.—Can I do anything, mamma?"

"Only not make a fuss, Bertie," said that lady, trying to appear elegantly occupied with some tatting that Maurice remembered of old; "you are not usually in such a hurry for dinner."

"Bertie likes things in course," said her father, smiling.

"Bertie is very thoughtless and inconsiderate," said her mother, severely.

"Bertie's so wonderfully altered, that I shouldn't have known her if I'd seen her anywhere but here," said Maurice, admiringly; and under this battery of observation and remarks, Bertie escaped from the room, to see *why* the dinner they were all so palpably waiting for didn't come.

She went along the passage and through the kitchen door, and the red-

elbowed ruler of the Bray *cuisine* looked up and softened perceptibly when she saw who was the invader of her domain.

"La, Miss Bray!" she began, "I thought it was your 'ma, I did."

"I thought I'd come and tell you that Master—that Mr. Power was going to stay, and that therefore you needn't wait till he's gone, to let us have dinner, cook."

"Your 'ma's orders was, that the dinner should be kept back half an hour or so, to give time for the pudding."

"For what pudding?"

"The pudding missus had me make soon as Mr. Power come. Why, Miss, you ain't used to be so fussy after your dinner."

Bertie walked away, thinking it would be labour lost to attempt to explain to cook how it wasn't the dinner so much that she wanted, as the opening to a return, on her own over-excited part, to the former order of things with regard to Maurice.

"Dear mamma," she thought, as she stood in the hall, looking vacantly through the open door into the garden, "how kind and how like her to get up a *pudding* for Maurice, just as if he were a boy again! I fancy, though, it would have been a more comfortable kindness to have given him what there was, and not to try and play at entertaining company."

Then it suddenly occurred to her that it behoved her, in her character of daughter of the house, to acknowledge the presence of this welcome guest by a slight renovation of her toilet. Her hair was very rough; she saw that with annoyance, directly she gained her own room and obeyed woman's first impulse, viz., looked in the glass; and her dress—of not exactly russet brown, but some such sombre hue—was of infinitely unbecoming make, she immediately perceived. "There's only time for a band and clean collar; and oh! I *must* do my hair." She did it accordingly, and, as is usual under circumstances of haste, did it stiffly and ungracefully. Renovated Bertie was not half so nice-looking, Maurice thought, when she took her seat at the dinner-table, as the rough Bertie he had seen under the medlar tree.

Maurice was seated opposite to her; and as he was very hungry, and engaged in very animated conversation—if that can be called conversation which consists in having all the talk to one's self,—Bertie had an opportunity of calmly surveying him, and noting what time had done for this old playfellow of hers. The same feeling came over her, as she looked at his handsome, proud, dashing face; at his bright wavy hair, and half-haughty, half-melting eyes; at his well-cut, expressive lips, just shaded by a young golden-hued moustache; at his fair, aristocratic beauty altogether,—the same feeling came over her as had possessed her long ago, when, leading him down to look at the sea, the contrast in their personal appearance first struck her. And Bertie sighed.

CHAPTER VII.

A HAPPY FORTNIGHT.

BERTIE soon got over all feeling of chagrin that Maurice should see the meagreness of things in general. He established himself as their guest with the old, familiar, graceful ease that had belonged to him and led them all captive when he was a boy. He was so happy at being with them—so perfectly satisfied with the unbroken monotony of the life they led—so pleased and cheerful—nay, more, hilariously happy, in Bertie's society, that it would have been strange indeed if they had not all liked to have him amongst them again, and if Bertie in particular had not been happy and pleased and cheerful.

"My sister is very elegant, and well-bred, and all that sort of thing, and I dare say she can say sharp things (she used to say them) if a leading sharp thing is said to her; but she isn't companionable like you are, Bertie: I should never get tired of being with you;—I wish *you* were my sister."

"I'm sure I wish it too, Maurice: if I were your sister, I think I should be always stirring you up to do something."

"Oh, that would be a bore," said Maurice, laughing. "Dear little far-seeing pet! do you think I'm idling, ungrateful one, when it's you who chain me here? I don't know what it is, Bertie; you don't talk very much, but what you do say always keeps me on wishing to hear the next thing from you."

"I had no idea my conversation was so interesting; nor is it, Maurice, in reality; it's only that you're used to me. If you feel as I do, hearing me talk now is like some strings that have been broken joining again."

"Well, I confess the idea wouldn't have struck me, if you hadn't mentioned it. Nor does it very forcibly now, but it is very pleasant;" and he stretched himself in the sunbeams on the grass at her side, and looked up with a quiet, indolent, luxurious happiness into her eyes, that was most gratifying to one who studied his pleasure as Bertie Bray had ever done.

"It is very pleasant," he went on dreamily after a time, "and I should like to feel sure that it will always last."

"How last?"

"Why, this sort of coming down to Fincham to rest, whenever the racket and worry of the world are a little too much for me."

"While we 'last' at Fincham," said Bertie, rather sadly, "you know that your coming and finding rest with us can too, Maurice."

"Yes, that's what I mean," he answered, languidly; the sunbeams were making him sleepy;—"that's exactly what I mean: when I like a thing,

I like to feel that the odds are in favour of its going on for ever—at least, as long as I want it to go on.”

“Some things might be altered here for the better, don’t you think?” she asked, quietly.

“Nothing,” he answered, vehemently, “nothing whatever. Bertie, you’re a little wretch of a radical and reformer. I’m conservative, and like things to remain as they are.”

“Well, I don’t,” said Bertie, stoutly; “for instance, poor papa’s remaining as he is pains me cruelly,—he deserves something better. Oh, Maurice, you must say *that*.”

“You visionary pet!” Maurice said, drawing her face down to his to be kissed. “Why, no; there’s something quite picturesque in your father’s position, looked at properly;—genius in the shade, it’s quite poetical.”

Bertie started as if she had been stung.

“Maurice,” she asked, in a low, unsteady voice, “did you ever feel *much*—*very* much? I mean, did you ever ache with joy or grief?”

“I never ached with ‘joy,’ I am certain, and I don’t think I ever did with grief. Why did you ask?”

“Nothing; only I have.”

“What made you think of it now? That’s what’s so amusing about you, Bertie; you break from what you’re talking about, and fly off at a tangent to something else. I was going to ask for the clue, in order to follow your train of thought; but perhaps knowing the clue would weaken the interest.”

He was not likely to gain the clue; she was still from old association too much the slave of his physical superiority, to tell this young Apollo that his allusion to her father had made her *ache*, for that she loved him—Maurice Power—so well.

An undefined dread that he was selfish began to prey upon her; Maurice Power was beginning to cost her pain.

It was a delightful time altogether, though, that first visit of Maurice’s to Fincham. Bertie brightened perceptibly, and rushed through her self-imposed and scrupulously performed duties in the schoolroom with a *verve* and vigour that astonished her father. She was not awake herself to the knowledge of what caused the change, but she was happier generally; “for even on a sleeper’s lips the wine of love is sweet.”

Maurice was quite a young *grand seigneur* among them all. He insisted on their performing pleasant pilgrimages to drink champagne and eat cold chicken and salad on the damp grass, under the shade of old ruins, and journeying to the county watering-places, to have hot lobsters for tea, and other extravagances, which caused the six young gentlemen his successors (or, at all events, the happy ones whose lucky lot it was to join in these pleasures) to regard him with mingled admiration and envy. The admiration was bestowed upon him with respect to the champagne and

lobsters; the envy was solely a question of passion, for the boys, one and all, were madly in love with Bertie, who looked upon them from the colossal altitude of seventeen, with pity, not altogether unhalloved with contempt.

And when he had been with them a fortnight, he was still delighted with the success of the plan he had proposed for himself, in a romantic huff, at finding himself not quite so fully appreciated at home that first night of his arrival as he expected and deserved to be.

"'Twas a lucky move—a precious happy thought, my coming down here, Bertie," he said; "I shall stay here till I've decided on a career."

For Bertie had implanted some of her visionary notions, as he called them, into the young man's mind.

But he postponed the question of a career indefinitely when he got a note from his mother, telling him that her annual ball was to come off on a grander scale than usual this year (in consequence of its being Frances' last appearance as Miss Power), at Willis's Rooms, and suggesting that he should come up and adorn it.

"Bertie," he exclaimed suddenly, when he had imparted some of the contents of the letter to her, "couldn't you come too?—you shall come too."

"Impossible, Maurice—absolutely impossible!"

"But why? What absurd nonsense! I say you *shall*; don't try to be a rebellious pet, but decide what you'll wear at once."

He was laughing with his old gay, bright hilarity. Bertie felt unaccountably sad; she did not like to say one reason why it was impossible for her to go to his mother's ball was, that she had received no invitation; and another, that she had no dress, and no money to buy one. So she simply repeated,—

"Utterly out of the question, Maurice. Pray don't say anything of the kind before papa or mamma; 'twould only vex them."

"I don't care! I say you shall go, you foolish little thing," he said, with affectionate imperiousness; "I shall take you up—my mother will be delighted to see you."

"Maurice," she said, between laughing and crying, "I shall make you angry, but I must say it: you talk like a boy; *how* could I go with you without an invitation? Besides, I couldn't go if I had one."

And having said this, she turned and ran out of the room, in order not to discuss what was painful to her any longer.

Maurice was savagely annoyed, for the first five minutes after her exit, at her disapproval of the scheme he had made and thought he should enjoy. At the end of the five minutes he let anger go by, and thought, "After all, she's right. I'll make my mother send her a proper invitation." In a quarter of an hour he was up-stairs packing his portmanteau, and wishing he had had more practice in waltzing lately; and in an hour he was gone!

Stifling a heavier sigh than she had ever had an inclination to heave

before, Bertie left the room, when her mother and herself had sped the parting guest, and sought her father. "Maurice is gone," she said, going up to his side: "he left all kinds of messages for you, dear; and said if you would have him, he would soon come back; and—and—Can I help you more to-day?"

She bent her head down on his upturned face as she asked it: she did not want her eyes read just then, for some reason or other; and her father seemed to be reading them.

"Yes," he answered, tenderly; "take these exercises up into your own room, where you can give your mind to them without being disturbed, and correct them for me."

His reading had been a brief one; but he was one who read aright at a glance generally, and he was averse to violent remedies. So Bertie Bray spent the morning of Maurice Power's departure up in her room alone, correcting exercises.

CHAPTER VIII.

SHOWING SOME OF A BRITISH MATRON'S CARES.

"HAS your brother said anything to you about Miss Bray?"

The question was asked by Mrs. Power, the day after Maurice's return home, as her daughter and herself were driving back to Berkeley Square, after a pleasant hour in Michel's shop.

"About who?" was the rejoinder of Miss Power, whose tones were far too refined and elegant for the slight lapse from the path of rigorous grammar to be at all offensive.

"Miss Bray,—Bertie Bray, as he calls her; the daughter of the man he went to school with, at Fincham."

"Oh dear no, mamma; what should he say about her to me?"

"He has been begging me to 'be attentive' to her for the sake of something—I'm not clear what,—and to send an invitation to come and stay with us for the ball. It seems (I never thought of it before) that she's grown up, and is a sort of purest gem serene, shining in the ocean of obscurity. Maurice spoke quite enthusiastically about her to me last night."

"How old is she?" asked Miss Power.

"Seventeen, I think he says."

"She's too old for it to be well to cultivate Maurice's enthusiasm for her, then. I shouldn't ask her up if I were you, mamma. Suppose," continued Miss Power, actually sitting erect with agitation at the bare supposition—"suppose she comes and fastens herself on us for life; those kind of persons are not to be trusted."

"I don't imagine her a Becky Sharpe," Mrs. Power said; but she said it more to herself than to her daughter, on whom, indeed, the allusion fell

flat. And then she went on thinking that perhaps it would be better to gratify Maurice by acceding to his request, than to make an interesting question of it by refusing. So she said that evening, "I shall send your old friend the invitation, Maurice dear. Poor child, though, I fear it will be a cruel kindness; she will be out of her element: *you* must devote yourself to her."

Maurice had a twinge of something immediately, which, if it was not regret that he should have made this thing a point, was uncommonly like it. He scarcely liked the prospect of devoting himself to one who might appear to his mother and sister's friends to be out of her element. "Poor little Bertie!" he thought; "I hope she'll have the good sense to adhere to her resolution."

Bertie could not help feeling pleased when the invitation arrived. It was very kindly worded; it pressed her with apparent earnestness; and it wound up with a speciously frank acknowledgment that it was all the work of her (the writer's) son. "Look here, mamma," Bertie said; "isn't it kind of Maurice to make his mother take the trouble to ask me, when he knew I couldn't go?"

"I'm sure I wish you could," Mrs. Bray said, pensively.

"Thank you, dear mamma; I know you always wish me to enjoy myself."

"It isn't so much *that* now,—as I was thinking, if anything *did* happen to your poor dear father, these people might help you to something like a good situation."

Bertie knew how kindly it was all meant—how sorrowfully her mother often thought of her (Bertie's) unprovided-for future—how truly and deeply she would mourn for her husband; but the speech grated through all her heart and soul, with a grinding agony that must be experienced to be understood.

"I'll just go and speak to papa," she said, humbly; and she left the room with her letter.

"I haven't the remotest idea of even wishing to go, papa," she said, while he was reading it; "but I like the kindness, coming as it does from Maurice."

"My pet! you can't go," he said, sympathetically.

"Never mind, papa; it's a little thing to give up."

"Not for a girl of your age, Bertie. Darling child, my experience has been small enough; but I know that a sacrifice is never lessened in the eyes of the one who makes it, by others underrating it: its amplitude can only be appreciated by comparison,—it's not a little thing to give up, my daughter; but you would give up more if you went, *when you came back again.*"

"Yes, I think I should; I thought the same at once," Bertie answered, frankly. "I'll go and write my note of refusal to Mrs. Power, and when I have done that, and sent it, the 'sacrifice,' as you were good enough to call it, will be an accomplished fact, and I shall be all right again."

That it was not the lost opportunity of gyrating round a room in a pretty dress that Bertie regretted, may be assumed from the circumstance that the thought which flashed through her mind, as she dropped her note into the letter-box, with a sigh, was, "Will Maurice have *time* to be sorry?"

"Your little friend has refused Maurice," his mother said to him, handing him the note. "I am very sorry; I should like to have seen her."

And Maurice flushed over cheek and brow, and repented, now that she was not coming, that he had hoped "she would adhere to her resolution."

There had been an unshared anxiety in Mrs. Power's mind as to the inviting of another guest. Mention has been already made in these pages of a figure that occupied a prominent position in the brief retrospective survey Miss Power took on the night she achieved her destiny. The unshared anxiety oppressing Mrs. Power's mind was, first, whether this figure should be asked to appear at her ball at all; and secondly, how the feelings which animated it would develop themselves if it was there. "Frances is prudence itself," she argued, "but she *has* liked him—and old men are tenacious, and Victor Rawley the reverse of reserved; however, he *must* meet her, so the sooner the better."

Mrs. Power acknowledged the wisdom of her course when the night came, and a rival dowager, with two daughters out, and two more who might have been long ago, 'if only' their sisters would marry, blocked up the doorway two minutes longer than was necessary to whisper, first, her congratulations on the engagement with Sir Michael, "who really *wasn't* so old as people *said*," and then her sympathetic supposition that "young Rawley wouldn't be there."

"Victor not here!" Mrs. Power smiled, sweetly, with amiable derision at the idea of such a thing; "I shall be very much disappointed if he is not—and so will he be."

"Rumour says," returned the rival dowager, "that he *is* disappointed."

"Oh, I trust not," Mrs. Power rejoined, with a large, warm frankness, that would have utterly subdued and routed any but a rival dowager; "he had set his hopes so entirely on that attachéship, that I cannot think fate will persecute him so as to deprive him of it." And then the two ladies smiled at one another, and the guest moved on.

It was wise to have the meeting over before the eyes of the world as soon as possible. As woman of the world, and as mother, and as *ecce*, Mrs. Power felt that it was, when a man of about six-and-twenty *stopped* before her, and made the momentary bow and speech of civilization. The room was crowded with some of the finest specimens of the finest *men* in the world, the English aristocracy,—but this man was something *more*. As he stood bending his proud, dark head down *deferentially* to speak to

her, Mrs. Power looked up into his passionate, magnificently handsome face, and thought, "Were Frances less of a statue, I would pray that this attachéship might be his at once; as it is, it all matters little; he can't care for her long."

"Victor, you've been a stranger lately; you have not even seen Maurice," she said, kindly.

"No; I've been down sketching in Wales—quite out of the world—hearing nothing."

"Then I will tell you two things that will interest you—arrange my shawl, will you?" (and she turned her back to him),—"this draught is cruel at my age:—you must offer your congratulations to Frances—she's going to marry Sir Michael Blayne—and your condolence to me: you know how I prided myself on Maurice's ability; and he has been expelled from the university."

"The folds are most artistic. I will do both most heartily, Mrs. Power; thank you for giving me the opportunity of arranging your shawl."

She turned round now and looked at him. He was very pale, but he was looking very kindly at the mother of the woman he loved. She was trying to spare both his heart and his pride; and he was so rich in both.

"I know Frances has been careful to keep a waltz for you, Victor. Later in the evening I will introduce you to Sir Michael; he has heard of you, of course, from us all—from your being such an *habitué* of our house; it is well you should know at once, one who is soon to be a member of our family."

From which speech Victor Rawley judged, and judged rightly, that rumour had made him a bugbear in the path of the shaly baronet.

It is utterly impossible to know what is in the heart of a man, unless he tells you, and has no motive for deceiving you. When Mr. Rawley found Miss Power, he asked her at once for the waltz, in tones that might have fallen from her brother's or grandfather's lips.

"Since I saw you last, I've been in Wales, sketching," he said, when they made their first pause.

"How wrong of you to waste the best part of the season in such a way!"

"Wasn't it?—quite out of the way of hearing anything for a month. Shall we go on?"

She could hear his heart beating wildly, and her own gave half a throb as she reflected, "Does he know?" When they stopped they were near an alcove, in which was an unoccupied seat.

"I will sit down for a moment," she said; and they pushed aside the flowers and entered. She seated herself and arranged her flowing, voluminous robe, and he stood by looking down on the regal beauty of her fair head and glittering shoulders; so they remained for a few moments,

and then she raised her head, and their eyes met. Hers was a cold, pitiless gaze; his, one of passionate, ardent interrogation; she almost trembled under it, but she felt that to tremble would be to allow him to speak, and Miss Power knew that he must be kept from speech now.

"I am quite rested again, Mr. Rawley," she said, rising; "you shall finish telling me about your Welsh trip another time."

"Frances!"

He caught her hand as he spoke, and she ever so gently pressed his.

"You must not keep me here, Victor; Sir Michael Blayne has asked me to dance the next quadrille with him."

"I will not interfere with his just claims," he replied; "I have to offer my congratulations, Mrs. Power told me just now."

"Didn't you know it before?" she asked, as she bowed and smiled her acknowledgments of his tardy recognition of her promotion.

"I went out of town just after it was made public—"

"And so it escaped your memory," she interrupted; "very naturally too. Bring your sketches some evening and show us, do!"

"Shallow-hearted and cold," he muttered, as he watched her take her place in the quadrille; "to have married her would probably have been misery, but to lose her is hell."

In the mean time Maurice had been obeying his mother's commands to the letter, if not in the spirit: she had begged him to make himself as agreeable as he could, and he had done so with his whole heart; but only to one person.

"Who's that girl in blue?" he had asked eagerly of his sister, at an early stage of the affair, pointing out a sylph in a flaxen, very much frizzed head, and a cloud of blue *tulle*.

"Constance Pashleigh."

"Introduce me."

So he was introduced, and in love at the same moment: that he did not impart his passion to the object of it at once, was only by an effort, colossal in its magnitude, of that good breeding which was second nature with him. He could not tell her his love, but he displayed it, poor boy, not alone to her, but to the whole room. "Young Power was gone entirely on the greatest flirt out," men said next day, when Maurice reined up by the side of the most perfect fair equestrian in the Row.

"Have you spoken to Frances?" Mrs. Power said to Victor once, when circumstances over which they had no control—viz., the evolutions of the fashionable mob she had assembled—brought them together.

"Yes," he answered, "I have done what you told me to do, Mrs. Power."

"And no more?" she said.

"What more should I have done?" he asked, bitterly.

Now Mrs. Power liked Victor Rawley for many reasons: he had brilliant qualities, social and mental, and she could appreciate them, therefore she desired no breach; besides, she knew he had always had a

sort of admiring regard for her, and she did not wish this to cease; so she put her hand very kindly on his arm now, and said;—

“What more should you have done? Ay, Victor, you are right—I am an old woman, and may say it without reproach—you are not likely to sue a second time in vain. My boy, I hope to see you with a better wife than my daughter would ever have made you.”

He laughed and shrugged his shoulders. “Yes, there seems small cause enough why she should be the one woman in the world to me, doesn’t there, Mrs. Power? yet I may as well tell you—and then you can forward future intimacy between us or not, as you think fit,—her coldest favour fires me more than another woman’s passionate regard will ever have the power to do. She would never give a pair of gloves for me, though she has led me on, step by step, to be willing to give my soul for her.”

Mrs. Power’s cheek mantled, and a brighter light came into her eyes.

“Foolish boy!” she said; “how dare you say this to me?”

“How dared you ask me here? I might as well say, knowing what you do know; but it would be as foolish as your question. How dare I? Because I know that she wouldn’t accept the gift; it would be of no service to her.”

Mrs. Power sighed.

“You have reason, perhaps, to speak as you do, Victor; she is less disinterested, may be, than the majority of girls of her age. You are right, too, about my venturing to ask you here. I knew you would respect her position with regard to Sir Michael, and make no sign.”

“You are wrong, then. I respect you and her and myself, but not her position with regard to Sir Michael; that I have a contempt for: but even if you had not trusted me, she would have been safe; she’d have chilled me off from making the sign—she’ll do nothing to risk her position.”

“I pray God not—I hope not,” said the mother, fervently; and the young man to whom she said it did not respond Amen. “Victor,” she went on, earnestly, “think for a moment dispassionately! what would she have been with you? Brought up in the school she has been—I am far from saying that it is the *best*, but still the great fact remains, that she has been brought up in it, and that its habits have become second nature to her,—what sort of existence would she have led as your wife? Frances isn’t a girl to think the world well lost for love; the fame you *will* have, most assuredly, would never have consoled her for the want of a brougham. I am speaking of my own child, but I can’t help saying it, Victor: you’d have bartered your gold for dross in winning her.”

“Have I complained?”

“Not in words, believe me, not in a way that I would allow to *others* could justify them in supposing that you had aught to complain of; but I know you so well, and I love you so well.”

The cool, polished woman was visibly warmly in earnest now, and Victor Rawley felt that she was so. He had been wounded deeply enough

that night; but there was, in this subtle flattery of tender interest felt for him by a still charming woman, balm and oil, for a time—just so long as it was being poured in, in fact. It was thoroughly disinterested—of that he was persuaded—this kindly, gentle feeling of compassionate affection that Mrs. Power so freely exhibited for him. She, the independent woman of good position, who had so well assured a place in the world, had nothing to gain from him; whereas he might possibly gain much from her. Already she had introduced him well, and brought him before society in a way his professional talents would have been long in doing; and he was grateful to her for this, and anxious to give all he could in return for it, which “all” was his gratitude.

Mrs. Power put up her glass to look after the graceful form of the sylph in blue who has been mentioned before.

“Charming-looking girl that Miss Pashleigh is,” she said; “I know very little of them, but I hear that, though she’s a lass with a long pedigree, she’s far from being portionless; and if so, Victor——well, I won’t say any more, but in the eyes of most men her beauty would suffice to throw Frances in the shade.”

“Her mother and mine were sisters,” he replied, carelessly; “little Constance and I shall never be nearer and dearer than we are at present, for in our family we’ve a prejudice against first cousins marrying.”

CHAPTER IX.

VICTOR RAWLEY AND LADY BLAYNE BURY THEIR PAST.

THERE was not much about either the preliminaries or the ceremony itself to distinguish Sir Michael’s wedding from other weddings. Gunter provided the ratifying food necessary on such occasions; Elise, the dresses; and Oxford, the education which enabled the two clergymen, behind the rails of the altar in St. George’s, Hanover Square, to unite in the bonds of holy matrimony Sir Michael Blayne, Bart., with Frances Power.

The presents on the occasion had been magnificent. When a beauty of good family marries a man of wealth and position, they nearly always are so. They were displayed, on the bridal morning, on a couple of tables in the drawing-room.

Miss Power was not averse to society, seeing that she had let herself go in her second season for no trifle. Sir Michael contributed jewels and old family lace to the show; and the six graceful girls, who had enacted the part of bridesmaids, had each given some small article of jewellery; and there was the show of gold and silver plate, and the glitter of gems, and the flash of much that was fine and costly; and unnoticed amongst it all, there was a little oil painting, sombre and unvarnished, and consequently by the many unlooked at.

It was a little cabinet picture—a gem, those said who understood, such

things—deeply framed after the manner of cabinet pictures; worthy of its destination, which was to be in Lady Blayne's boudoir: a picture that was pronounced a gem, and that was evidently exquisitely painted, but that "did not tell its story or explain its designation," those complained who looked at it; and Lady Blayne smiled for answer, and remarked, "No, it was fanciful."

It was called the "Falling Star," and it represented a man looking out into the dark night, from a brilliant lighted alcove where flowers bloomed, at one of those shooting mysteries; at the side of the picture, moving out of it almost, as you looked, was a woman richly dressed, who, though her face was turned partially away, you could see was beautiful and like Frances Power; she was leaning on the arm of an old man. Unquestionably the name told nothing—it could be nothing but the fanciful effort of uncertain genius. But it was there, amongst the rarer, richer presents, this gift of Victor Rawley to the beautiful bride.

He was there too, himself, with all the women; his own lovely cousin Constance Pashleigh among them, smiling at him and striving to attract his attention, as women will always smile at and strive to attract the handsomest and most distinguished man present. Neither the rival dowager—who had, on the occasion of the ball, commented on his possible absence—nor her saw-boned daughters—both of whom had been incessant in their offers to sit to him for every possible type of loveliness, from Cleopatra down to Effie Deans—could "detect anything" in the bride's bearing to him, or his to the bride. Nor was Sir Michael Blayne himself more successful. To all outward seeming, Lady Blayne and Victor Rawley had buried their dead.

The baronet was very proud of his new purchase: young as she was, her stately repose was such that she reflected honour on the honours his choice had brought upon her. Untangible report had been rife, during their short engagement, with whispers of a reciprocal attachment between the semi-professional, well-born artist and the beauty. But Sir Michael would not take back the handkerchief he had thrown. He had ignored the reports as steadily as he could while they might have influenced him, and now he disbelieved them: there was no regret in any glance that he caught directed by Lady Blayne to Victor Rawley; nor was there reproach in any that Victor Rawley directed to Lady Blayne.

Palpably, whatever had been, they had buried their dead now; and so Mrs. Power thought also.

They all surged through the dining-room doorway and overflowed the hall to see the bride start, when she came down in her travelling dress. The leave-taking was perfection—even her mother could not spoil it by a tear: Lady Blayne's perfect satisfaction with her own position forbade all weeping.

"I'll shake hands with her last.—Good-bye, my darling; God bless you," her brother cried, warmly, as he rushed forward to the side of the carriage

in which she had already seated herself, with her bridegroom by her side.

"No, I'll be the last to shake hands with Lady Blayne." Victor Rawley was the speaker; and he executed his threatened movement with such rapidity, that no one had time to feel surprised.

But though she had not time to feel surprised in the interval that elapsed between his clasping and releasing her hand, Lady Blayne had time to feel something else, and that was a small folded piece of paper. She quietly dropped it into her lap, where it reposed safely amidst the folds of her handkerchief, her scent bottle, and fan, till they reached the Great Western. She had not an opportunity of reading it until much later, when Sir Michael, overpowered by the unusual events of the day, had fallen asleep in a corner of the carriage; and then she mastered its contents in a way that looked as if the caligraphy were by no means unfamiliar to her.

"If you ever loved as you once led me to suppose you did," it ran, "tell me so, in pity, that I may guard us both by abstaining from seeing you when you come back as the wife of a man whom you never can love, and will shortly loathe. If you were as false *then* as you have been since, let your silence tell me so; precaution, in that case, will be unnecessary, and we shall meet."

Lady Blayne tore it in two, crushed it up together, and threw it out of the open window. Then she heaved a sigh, a very short, full one, and looked at Sir Michael, whose peculiar style of beauty was not enhanced by balmy slumbers; he looked purple and plathoric.

"I shall keep silence," she said, inwardly: "I don't want any sentimentalism, but Sir Michael will be rather tedious, I fancy, and Victor Rawley never is; so we *will* meet."

And then she took out a novel she had provided for the first day of the wedding tour, and read away as composedly as if she had not known that the heart once frankly given in supposed exchange for her own was bleeding sorely now at her base defection, — as composedly as if the "loathing" did not exist already.

"By Jove!" said Sir Michael, suddenly waking up, "I must have been asleep; I beg your pardon, really, Frances; I must have been, though, for I dreamt that I cut off your hair, and gave it to Riley, a fellow I need to know, who had been badly used by women, and who swore that golden-haired ones were never faithful."

Sir Michael laughed pleasantly at the remembrance of his dream.

"And where was the proof?" asked Lady Blayne. She was not interested. I have said that she never was in anything; how then should she have been in the illogical dream of her lord? but she asked out of politeness.

"The proof was that you were my wife still when I cut your hair off," growled Sir Michael. "Humph! the proof, indeed!"

Lady Blayne looked at him, with steady scorn in her eyes and on her

fresh, delicate, beautiful young mouth; and he moved uneasily under the look for a moment; then he spoke.

"What was that piece of paper you threw out of the window just now?—who was your note from?"

"Note!" she replied, scornfully; "Sir Michael, *do* you really mean that I am to render up an account of every piece of paper that comes into my possession? because, if you do, I'll begin at once. My pocket is full of letters that came this morning, before I went to be married. I kept them to read: now if you like to see them, you can."

And she began emptying her pockets as she spoke.

"There is one stipulation to which you must agree," she said, quietly: "I never look at a letter that has been read by another person, and I don't choose to appear ill-bred; therefore, as all letters addressed to *me* must be answered, if you choose to read them, the onus is on you of writing replies. I shall be very well satisfied, for I hate letter-writing."

And then she threw him her batch of epistles, and recommenced reading; and Sir Michael, heartily ashamed of himself, put them meekly together, and wished she would look up and give him an opportunity of magnanimously disclaiming all intention of interfering with her correspondence in future. But Lady Blayne would not look up, and the end of it was, that Sir Michael had to apologize humbly, both for the allegory respecting the golden hair, and the conjugal curiosity.

In the mean time Victor Rawley had escorted his cousin Constance home, and was placed by that young lady in the witness-box, in her boudoir, immediately on arriving there. Constance had come home to recruit and re-dress for the ball at Mrs. Power's in the evening; but she deemed that some of the hours that would otherwise have been devoted to that purpose would be well employed in catechizing her cousin.

"Now, Mr. Victor," she began, kneeling down by his side in her diaphanous bridesmaid's robes, and looking most winningly pretty, with her straw-coloured hair drawn back from her lovely little face, and arranged in a cluster of curls pendent from a comb behind—"now, Mr. Victor, you are to confess! What did you wish to get the last good-bye from Lady Blayne for?"

"Oh, for fun, I suppose."

"No, it was not for fun, for I was looking at you, and you can't deceive *me*: dear Victor—dearest Victor—do tell me;—you ought to tell me, because I am like your sister;—was it true that you cared for her? I should tell you if *I* cared for any one."

"They say you care for a good many in turn, Constance; but you never tell me anything about them."

Her beauty was childish almost, and so were her tender, graceful ways; but the soul of a woman looked out of her great blue eyes as they met his when he raised her face, and bent his own down towards it. He did not kiss her; his heart was full of another woman at the moment, or probably

he would not have resisted the pouting rosy mouth so tantalizingly within reach of his own. *She*, the coquette, was not in love with cousin Victor, but she was far from averse to feeling that she had the power to console him if any other woman gave him the heartache; in fact, she wanted him to be in love with her,—not deeply, not desperately, but just enough to keep her in practice; enough to make a sentimental flirtation (of an order that could not be reprehended, since he was her “cousin”) feasible, till she met with some nature, brilliant and sunny as her own, that she could sympathize with, or somebody severe enough to subjugate her; and then for Victor to accept the situation, and withdraw all claims on her attention. So now she leant her head—she still kneeling, and Victor sitting in a low chair—on his shoulder, and laid her little soft hand on his, and maintained a tender silence. And Victor, finding it pleasant to be caressed in this way while his imagination wandered after the bride of another, maintained a tender silence too, and occasionally clasped the soft little hand, or pressed his own dark hair against the fair head, out of gratitude for being allowed to be so quiet.

“Constance,” he said at last, “how old are you?”

“Sixteen,—two or three months over it. Now don’t begin to say I’m a child, and ought to be back in my native fastnesses: that’s what papa says whenever anything crosses him, and that’s what papa and I have very serious quarrels about; and I don’t want to quarrel with you, Victor.”

The young coquette lowered her eyelids as she said it, and softened her voice most unnecessarily, and readjusted with a skilful hand the diaphanous drapery.

He laughed.

“No, I won’t call you a child, Constance, but at sixteen you are far too young to have your ears polluted by words of love—”

“I don’t find they’ve polluted them,” she replied, with a pout.

“By words of love, that mean nothing from a man who’s sore at heart about another woman, like I am; otherwise”—and he kissed her now—“I couldn’t have a fairer distraction than you would be, Constance; you’d never care enough about me to hurt yourself, and you’d keep me or any other man on the alert.”

“Then you *have* been in love with Lady Blayne?”

“Even so!”

“What made you? She’s like a stone, and she’s not half as good-looking as her brother; *he’s* delightful.”

“I’ll give you two pieces of advice, darling:—never ask a man what makes him in love with a woman; no one can answer it, therefore the question is futile: and keep your heart clear for three or four years, and then give it to Maurice Power: he’ll be wanting to claim it before then, I fancy; but you’re far too young, and I shall not let him have you.”

“And what will you do?”

"What will I do?—in what way?"

"I mean what 'distraction' will you seek, since you won't have me? Mind, I don't agree to the plan about Mr. Power." (She blushed and laughed, as if the plan were far from disagreeable to her.)

"I hardly know myself yet, Constance; stay in London if I can, because it will be better than going away somewhere by myself, where I shouldn't even have the blessing of"—seeing *her*; he was going to say; but he checked himself, and said instead—"your sympathy."

"Dear, dear Victor," she said, frankly, "*how* I wish that it could console you!"

And then sage sixteen reflected that it would be just as well to make no hurried toilette; and being too much accustomed to Victor to find the least excitement in flirting with him, she withdrew without the slightest effort, to make it.

"She's a dear little thing," Victor thought. "Some men would forget Frances in her smiles, for though she isn't half so beautiful, she has ten times the talent and animation of Lady Blayne; but it's my curse to be faithful to a woman who has been false as the devil to me, and will be all along, I fear."

Constance would most certainly have been put to the test with regard to Maurice that night if a new current had not been given to his thoughts. An old friend of his mother's was present, and after hearing from Mrs. Power the story of the abrupt termination of her son's university career, General Capel propounded the inquiry to Maurice of whether he wouldn't like a commission in a cavalry regiment,—a crack one, either the Lancers or Hussars. And Maurice, excited by the new prospect, forgot to be as attentive to Constance as he had been heretofore, and, by his animated disregard of her claims being superior to these of his new career, caused her much anger and mortification. It was the first contest between love and ambition, and the latter carried the day. In his eager desire to get all things arranged and himself established in the army, Maurice's passion for Constance Pashleigh drifted as entirely out of sight as did for the nonce his friendship for Bertie Bray. A mere boy still, the newest fancy was always the most important and dearest thing to his mind; he gave himself up unreservedly to the full, undisturbed enjoyment of whatever gave him pleasure for the time. The thought of going into a cavalry regiment was pleasant to him,—he would not mar that pleasure by bothering his brains about anything else while that was fresh and green.

CHAPTER X.

LADY BLAYNE'S KETTLEDRUM.

"He's a beautiful pony, and his manners are charming," said Miss Bray, "but I don't think I ought to let you be so extravagant as to give him to

me, papa, unless you have him broken for harness: if he's broken for harness I could drive you and mamma about; but only for my own riding, no, no; I won't have him."

Bertie Bray was out on the terrace with her father; and below, a breaker had been running a handsome bay pony, with black points, up and down for their inspection. It was Bertie's birthday, and she was twenty-one (for four years have elapsed since we saw her last); and tuition having been prosperous of late, Mr. Bray was going to mark the occasion by presenting his daughter with a pony.

Bertie had lost all of angularity, and nearly all of brownness; she was now a finely formed, highly coloured brunette; not very tall, but so beautifully proportioned that she never looked short; not thin, but so slenderly rounded that her lithe figure reminded one of a sylph; with admirable "points,"—small head and waist, and exquisitely small and well-shaped hands and feet; with a graceful, animated, frank, proud bearing; not a pretty girl, perhaps, but unquestionably a charming one: this was what Bertie Bray looked on her twenty-first birthday.

"He'd step well in harness, Miss," the man who was holding the pony opined; and then he added, that he knew of a little basket phaeton that was for sale, going cheap!

"I should like to have it at once," Bertie, who was of rather an impatient spirit, said, when a committee of ways and means had been gone into, and it was decided that the chaise as well as the pony should be hers—"I should like to have it at once, to-day, papa; and then to-morrow I could drive over to the station to meet Maurice Power."

"Will you venture to do so, Bertie? You don't know the pony—your experience of driving isn't large; will you venture to show off before a stranger? for Captain Power will seem like one at first."

Mr. Bray had no desire to throw a damper over Bertie's spirits, but he remembered how mutual had been the feeling of satisfaction when Maurice had been with them before; how Bertie had drooped after his departure; and how entirely Maurice had appeared to forget her for those four years, during which he had been abroad, gaining laurels and promotion, and she had been quietly at home, developing into a glorious womanhood.

"As you will, papa," she replied, laughing; "but I can't consent to regard Maurice as a stranger, for I promised long ago that I never would do that till he wished me, and his coming here the week after his return to England after a four years' absence doesn't look much as if he wished to be forgotten. At any rate," she continued, returning to her point with true feminine pertinacity, "I should like to have the basket chaise home at once, since you are kind and generous enough to give it to me, dear; and then he can teach me to drive while he is here."

Bertie had no feeling of annoyance this time about Maurice, her god

of beauty and refinement, coming down and finding the land barren : in the first place, she was older ; and in the second place, the land was barren no longer ; therefore, as is frequently the case, her philosophy grew stronger in proportion as there was the less occasion for the exertion of it.

"But I'm very glad," she thought, in continuation of some reflections she had indulged relating to his last visit, "that everything is more comfortable, and that I shall have the pony chaise to take him about nicely."

The letter which had caused this perturbation in Miss Bray's usually well-regulated mind, concerning one whom even her indulgent father had assured her was virtually a stranger to her, had been composed and despatched under the following circumstances :—

Captain Power, two days after his return home after his four years' absence, had found himself sitting with a troop of other idlers in his sister's drawing-room. Lady Blayne's unexceptionable married life had not altered her one whit : she was as cold, as beautiful, as thorough-bred, as wise in her generation, as she had ever been in her maiden days, when her prudent, cautious self-control obliged even her mother to confess, and act upon the confession, that there was "no fear for Frances ; she was prudence itself ;" and she had her reward for her sceptical line of conduct in her husband's "unbounded confidence and trust," she said. Perhaps the secret of this unbounded confidence and trust lay in her having wisely resolved, at an early stage of their married career, to "keep the beast in awe." At any rate, beautiful Lady Blayne lived a life unblemished before the world ; and had the most complete liberty of action allowed her, as was right and well, for her actions were above suspicion—they would have stood the keenest scrutiny.

Victor Rawley was there, enjoying intellectual converse and partaking of tea at Lady Blayne's kitchen ; he was constantly there. "He has travelled so much, and talks art so well, that I should be sorry if Mr. Rawley dropped my afternoons," Lady Blayne would say ; and perhaps even she herself was not aware of the terrible fulness of joy his mere presence gave her. In default of anything better, sitting in the same room with the loved one, though speech be impossible, is something. As for Victor, he came for various reasons ; he told himself : one was that he met nice people there ; another, that his cousin Constance was frequently a guest ; another, that Frances might see how indifferent he had grown to her ; but somehow or other, his indifference was never the chiefest impression his presence made upon her mind.

That attachment had never been given him ; in default of it, he had accepted a situation in the Treasury ; so that, between his office and his studio in Sloane Street, he contrived always to have something to do in town during that portion of the year in which society, including the Blaynes, were in London. And it frequently happened that they adorned the same country house ! but this must have been the

merest chance, for not even prompt-tongued evil report bracketed their names together.

The four years that had passed since Frances Power's marriage had not improved Victor Rawley in the eyes of those who can only admire an open and ingenuous style of beauty. He was an Apollo still, but an Apollo with something on his mind; he went about with the air of one who had something to conceal, and who was quite prepared to resent anybody's supposing the same. Men said he would not look them in the face; but as he was no coward, I am disposed to think that this was only one of the assertions made without the slightest foundation, that men who are not guilty of the humbug of the assumption of frankness are subjected to.

At any rate, it was very convenient to drop in at Lady Blayne's, in Eaton Square, on his way down from the Treasury to his studio, and he availed himself of the privilege as usual on this special afternoon.

Mrs. Power and Victor Rawley had not been such allies of late. When Maurice, in the course of his inquiries after old friends, said to his mother, "And Victor—what has become of Victor?" Mrs. Power replied, "Oh, Mr. Rawley is in town, idling his time away as usual, I believe;" which was not kind, considering she had seen him, only the day before, at her daughter's, looking pale and haggard from "over-work," he had told her. His mother's tone, no less than her words, might have influenced Maurice; something did, evidently, for Victor Rawley was the only one of Lady Blayne's guests whom Lady Blayne's brother treated to a display of that *hauteur* which is ten times harder to bear from one of these joyous, sunny-natured, brilliant, curled darlings, than from a generally grave and saturnine man.

Lady Blayne was not much addicted to conversation. She sat on a little couch that was sacred to her, sometimes addressing a word or two to any one who might be near to her, but usually waiting to be addressed. She did not say much, but she smiled beautifully; her manners not being in the slightest degree volatile, no one wasted pity on Sir Michael for being invariably sent out of the way, down to his club on these occasions, where he was free to flatten his nose against the glass, and record how many of the men who passed were going to his wife's kettledrum.

But this day, when Maurice had been in the room about ten minutes, she roused herself from her normal quietude, and beckoned him to approach her, and avail himself of the two inches of couch which she indicated were at his disposal.

"Maurice," she began, "can you ride with us this evening? I will lend you a horse."

"Yes, delighted; who does 'us' mean, though?"

"Constance Pashleigh and myself."

"By Jove! and is she Constance Pashleigh still? What a lovely girl she must be grown!"

"She is lovely. I don't often speculate on possible events, but whenever she rides with me, Mr. Rawley joins us; and he spends a good deal of time at my house whenever Constance is staying with me: so don't fall in love with her over again if you can help it."

Lady Blayne turned her attention away from her brother now to welcome a distinguished guest, and he felt unaccountably annoyed with Victor Rawley still, though for a different reason than before.

"Fall in love with her over again!—run a tilt for her with that sinister-looking fellow! Not a bit of it," he muttered to himself, as he walked into Sir Michael's library, and prepared to write a letter to Mr. Bray announcing his intention of going down to see them. "I wonder if Bertie's Bertie Bray still?" he thought. "I was awfully fond of her."

But he was almost sorry that he had despatched his letter when, on arriving with his sister at the Apsley House entrance to the Park, a girl joined them on an excitable chestnut mare,—a girl whose exquisite beauty and high-bred animation caused his brow to flush with the remembrance that he had been cautioned not to fall in love with her over again.

"Victor had already offered his escort when I got your message asking me to join you, Lady Blayne," Miss Constance said, as her cousin joined them. "My mare won't go without jiffing, four abreast," she continued, "so I shall ride by you, Captain Power, because I've not seen you for such a long time,—not since I was quite young." She was still quite young enough not to mind speaking as if vast age and experience had been gained by her in the interval that had elapsed since they last met; she took a sort of frank, assured tone with him, that deceived him (for how was he to know that she took it alike with all?) into thinking that she meant him to understand that the old warm feelings mustn't be fanned into a flame again. And then she—the slenderest, lithest, smallest-waisted fairy that ever sat a horse—took to admiring the rather massive beauty of Lady Blayne's form; and then, by imperceptible gradations, got upon the subject of the rare symmetry and unmitigatedly "good style" and perfection of feature of the man who rode by Lady Blayne. And this fretted Maurice's nerves, and made him fret his horses, and caused him to long impatiently for the time when he should find himself with Bertie, who would, he knew, never annoy him by praising another man to his disgusted ears. And more than ever he hoped that she would be Bertie Bray still, and not a bride or an engaged young lady.

And in the mean time Victor Rawley rode along by Lady Blayne's side; and Mrs. Power in her brougham in the drive saw them, and shook her head, and sighed to herself.

Why she should have done so would have been difficult to determine; the whole world might have ridden by Lady Blayne's side, and heard the words she addressed to her companion, and the words he addressed to her. They were very few; I have said that she was not much addicted to conversation.

"Sir Michael is very good and considerate to me," she said; "he says I am looking pale, and so he means to take me on the Continent."

"Indeed! we shall miss you in town." (Sentences such as these were constantly floated by the winds into the ears of that portion of the London world that "listened" when Victor Rawley and Lady Blayne spoke to one another.) "By-the-bye, I was going to tell you that a poor friend of mine in India has had a present made him of a white elephant."

"Indeed!" Lady Blayne said; and there was very little interest in her tone.

"It's a kindness to kill, you know," he explained; and then Lady Blayne touched her horse on his shoulder, and thought "they'd have a canter."

"Rough canter that horse of yours seems to have, Lady Blayne," Miss Pashleigh said, when they turned at the top; "he's warmed himself, and made you crimson."

"Yes; he went off with the wrong leg," Lady Blayne said. And so the poor horse, who had been worried awfully by his mistress's handling of him, got the blame and bore the reproach.

"I shall assist you in bearing the burden of the white elephant," Victor Rawley whispered, when their ride was over, and he was assisting her to dismount. "Abroad without a friend, life would be hard, even for you."

CHAPTER XI.

BERTIE BRAY'S GOOD FORTUNE.

CONSTANCE and Maurice dined together at Lady Blayne's the following day alone, for they were going to the opera with her; and in the conservatory after dinner the golden locks entangled him a willing victim in the web of a flirtation before he was aware of it. He wanted to try the effect of some heavy white waxen flower against her cloudy hair; and to do it properly he had to raise a curl, and when that was in his hand he lost judgment to the extent of stooping to press his lips on it.

"Constance," he murmured, "I thought you had forgotten me; forgotten what great friends we were before I left. Have you ever thought of me?"

Constance thoroughly appreciated the truth of that saying, that if "speech be silver, silence is golden;" so she raised her eyes and looked at him, and ever so gently took the curl out of his hand, and the flower with it; and the look and the gesture expressed thousands of deliciously flattering thoughts of him. When Lady Blayne looked into the conservatory to tell them it was time to go to the opera, she found her friend and her brother on those tremulously intimate terms which portend that the disease called love is taking favourably. At the opera, too, no check

came to it, for Victor Rawley came into Lady Blayne's box, "seeing his cousin there," and explained the *libretto* (it was a new opera) to Lady Blayne in an exhaustive manner, that took up all her attention.

It was a thrilling opera; there was some absorbing music in it. More than once Constance entirely forgot that her hand rested in Maurice's during an entire passage, and was being warmly clasped, instead of merely relieved of the lorgnette, as she had intended.

The last thing he said to her that night was,—"Good night."

"Miss Pashleigh—Constance, I am going into the country to-morrow for a few days. It's an engagement, or I wouldn't go. Have I your permission to call immediately on my return?"

And Constance Pashleigh said, "Yes."

"I hope Bertie has not forgotten me; I hope she loves me still," he muttered, as he stood ringing the Brays' door-bell the following day; and then he thought, "To what end?" for he remembered Constance Pashleigh.

They were all as heartily glad as of old to see him again. Bertie came forward, and took up the thread of their intimacy as if it had only been broken yesterday. In appearance she was not the Bertie he had known before, and he recognized that fact by a deep bow and a totally irrepressible glance of surprised admiration; but in other respects she *was* the same Bertie, as he felt when she put the dessert dish she was carrying down, and held out both her hands to him, and never turned her face away when he pressed his lips on her brow.

"I can't be more altered than you are, Maurice," she said, "and I should have known you anywhere! You were my *beau idéal* in the old days, you know," she continued, laughing and blushing, "and now——" She stopped herself, and crimsoned with an emotion that was partly shame and partly something nobler. As her father had said, "he was almost a stranger" to her now; and she checked the confession she was going to make to her old child-lover, that he "more than realized every ideal," in doubt as to how he would take it. "For though we were like brother and sister, I suppose all that must be at an end now," she thought, as she looked on the bearded and bronzed handsome man, whom she remembered so vividly as the beautiful fair-faced boy.

Perhaps she took a pride in showing him that, though she had grown up a flower in the wilderness of Fincham, she was not one whit behind the choicest exotics in all the graces that charm. Perhaps it was, that it is a natural thing to strive to give pleasure where pleasure is gained. Perhaps it was the natural pardonable feminine inability to be other than flatteringly attentive in her manner to one whom she had always had a warm affection for, and who *was* flatteringly attentive to her. Whatever was the cause of it, the effect remained the same. Bertie Bray exercised such an influence over him by her sympathetic bearing, her power of mind, and her beauty of person, that before he had been three days in her company—

he had made no "vows" to forget, remember, and had not sworn a faith which he now wished to forswear, but at any rate—"Constance was beloved no more."

"Bertie," he said to her suddenly, one afternoon, when he was teaching her to "handle the ribbons," and adapt her hand to Azelle's mouth—"Bertie, I believe I've been in love with you ever since I was twelve years old."

"Well," she replied (her heart was beating wildly, but pride was as strong an element as love in Bertie's nature)—"well, I can only say that it's a fortunate thing the spell has been broken."

"Why 'fortunate' ? and how is it broken ?"

"Oh, I don't know 'how,' but it is. Maurice, don't talk nonsense; we shall always be fond of each other, but if anything *could* make me quarrel with you, it would be your talking nonsense and playing at being sentimental."

"Bertie, Bertie," he interrupted, hotly; "that's the only fault you have,—you *won't* take what I say seriously. I love you, Bertie darling, dearly, *dearly*; there's no nonsense in that, is there? Tell me, my own, my own!"

"Oh, Maurice, Maurice," she half sighed; prophetically, "*we never either of us meant it to come to this.*"

But Maurice Power was a man of honour, and he requested the boon of his daughter's hand from Mr. Bray that day directly they returned from what sanguine, loving, happy Bertie called "that happiest of drives."

"I think it had better not be spoken about till Maurice has told his mother," Bertie suggested that evening, when her mother came into her room to tell her that Mrs. Williams, the rector's wife, was down below. And Mrs. Bray said she didn't see why; "it wasn't an engagement for either party to be ashamed of, as far as she could see."

"But still I shouldn't like it spoken about at once," Bertie reiterated. "I would rather it should tell itself in time than that I should run about and tell—or be accused of doing so. Maurice and I shall be just as happy before it's made public as after."

It was known in a few days, though, despite the reticence Bertie had elected to observe. Servants are the grandest members of the Diffusion of Knowledge Society, and neither Maurice nor Bertie was too apt to be on guard perpetually. The tone of a voice, a half-caught allusion to a future to be shared together, love-fraught looks that were clearly authorized,—these told their own tale to the observant housemaid, who forthwith went and told it to whomsoever would listen to her.

"Our young lady's keeping company with the Captain—him as was Master Power," was rapidly bruited about the village; and soon it came to the keenly-attentive-to-her-neighbours'-business ears of Mrs. Williams.

"It will be a very fine match for her if it's true," she said to her husband at luncheon. "I shall go up this afternoon, and find out about it. I can make an excuse by asking Bertie to take a stall at the bazaar."

The bazaar was to be held the next week, and was in aid of the restoration of the left wing of the Rectory, and the re-carpeting of Mrs. Williams' pew. The tithes were large at Fincham, but in this respect Mr. Williams was not at all proud; he took all that was his due, and then graciously asked his faithful flock for more.

"I didn't mean to offer Bertie a stall," Mrs. Williams went on, pensively, "because the Barrington girls and the Ethringtons won't like being brought into such close contact with her; but if she's going to be married to Captain Power, I should like to pay her attention."

Mr. Williams was a nice man—at least a degree and a half wider-minded than his wife,—and he was very fond of Bertie Bray, as indeed were most men: he felt pleased that his wife had determined, in direct opposition to the known wishes of the Barringtons and Ethringtons, to ask Bertie to hold a stall; but he knew that if he expressed too much satisfaction thereat, Mrs. Williams would not be pleased; so he only said,—

"It won't be a bad thing for the bazaar, whatever it may be for the Barringtons; Bertie'll sell things that they would never have got rid of."

"Just what I've been thinking myself; I'll balance the attractions by giving Bertie all the ugliest things."

"And so, hearing it publicly spoken of, I thought I'd come up and congratulate you, dear," Mrs. Williams said to Bertie, when the latter had promised to take the stall at the bazaar, and had given a blushing but proud and happy assent to the rectoress's question of "Wasn't she engaged to Captain Power?"

"I don't know how it came to be spoken of publicly," said Bertie; "it's too new for me to quite like *that*."

"Oh, I don't see why you should be ashamed of it," Mrs. Williams said, patronizingly, "if his family make no objection."

And then the fact was screwed out of Bertie, that as yet his family were in ignorance of the step Maurice had taken.

"At any rate," Mrs. Williams said, smilingly, when she was leaving, "I suppose I am not to contradict it when I hear it mentioned, am I?"

"Oh no! why should you when I tell you that it is true? I am far too proud of it and happy in it to wish to deny it, Mrs. Williams; I only didn't wish it to be common talk so soon."

"Ah, my dear, *then* you were wrong," Mrs. Williams said; "it binds a man—nothing like it."

"But Maurice wants no *binding*," Bertie answered, proudly; "and if he did I wouldn't try to bind him." And then, as Bertie finished her sentence, Captain Power came into the room, and renewed his acquaintance with the lady who had of old striven to command his attention to her husband's sermons, by fixing her eyes upon him, and frowning with pious severity, whenever his bored mind had been visible in his face.

I do not suppose that his feelings were more friendly towards her at this moment than they had been on those bygone occasions, for he had a

conviction that she had been talking him over, and talking his engagement over; and this latter is a thing that no man likes.

"I have come to ask Miss Bray to hold a stall at the bazaar next week," she said presently. "I suppose *you* will have no objection to it, Captain Power?"

"I suppose that Miss Bray has already given you her definitive? I have no right to interfere with other ladies' bazaar-like propensities; but I wouldn't allow my sister to turn herself into a shopwoman, for the amusement of all the fools in a neighbourhood."

"Maurice, you shouldn't have said *that*," Bertie said to him when Mrs. Williams had taken a happy departure. "I wouldn't hold the stall for the world, if you don't approve of it; but you might say so to me, and not be cross in *reality*, and *affect* an indifference."

"My darling Bertie! you wouldn't have me make an ass of myself, surely, and come the 'engaged man' at once, would you? That's the worst of a disgusting country place: everybody will be talking about us, and pointing us out. Now, don't look offended, my pet. I only mean that there'll be the greater reason to marry you, and take you out of it all."

"I wonder if your mother and sister will ever like me, Maurice?"

"Of course they will, in their way. Why shouldn't they? My mother takes very kindly to people who are never awkward, and you never *are* awkward in any way. As to Lady Blayne, she never liked any one yet but herself and" (he laughed as he said it) "Victor Rawley."

"Who is Victor Rawley?"

"A fellow who was in love with her before she married,—a handsome fellow, an artist, what women call picturesque-looking."

"But if she was in love with him, why didn't they marry?"

"Frances felt strongly the necessity of living in that station of life to which she had been accustomed. Rawley had nothing, and a man can't marry on *that*, you know—not such a girl as Frances, that is. You're different. I'd have married you if I'd not had a penny; for you're made of different material altogether, my darling."

Bertie found it very sweet to be so lauded and caressed, and deeply, dearly loved by this man, whom she had loved so long and faithfully. It was gloriously flattering that he who must, she thought, have been subjected to the fascinations of the fairest, should have come back to her after it all, and proved that he deemed her fairer still.

And sitting there wrapt in these delicious thoughts, Bertie grew to having a great trust in the security of this happiness of hers. And then she told him what Mrs. Williams had said about binding him.

"As if I ever *could* doubt you, Maurice; or as if—if I did—I would *want* to bind you."

And Maurice whispered,—

"False to you, dearest—that would be impossible." And as he said it, he thought of how he should get off that call on Constance.

